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# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

# FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.E.

ADVOCATE.

"*Bellum maxime omnium memorabile quæ unquam gesta sint me scripturum ; quod Hannibale duce Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullis inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit : et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas primo Punico conserebant bello ; odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt quam viribus ; et adeo varia belli fortuna, ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt.*"—*TIT. LIV. lib. 21.*

VOL. I.



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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Importance and Splendour of the Subject—Great Diversity of Character and Event which it exhibited—Causes in the State of Society which first led to Freedom—Difference between Liberty in Ancient and Modern Times—Origin of the Representative System—Feudal System—Causes which led to its Decay in the Northern Monarchies of Europe—Urban civilisation in Italy—Causes of its Decline—Circumstances which restored general Freedom after the Extinction of Feudal Securities against arbitrary Power—Combination of these Causes in producing the French Revolution.—P. 11—31.

## CHAPTER I.

### COMPARATIVE PROGRESS OF FREEDOM IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

Parallel of the English and French Revolutions—Early Freedom acquired by the People in the former country—Great and beneficial Effects of the Norman Conquest—and of the Religious Contests of the Seventeenth Century—Moderation and Clemency of all Parties in the Great Rebellion—Early History of France—Its striking Difference from England—Disastrous Effects which there resulted from the English Wars—Causes which prevented the growth of a free Spirit in France—and rendered nearly absolute the Power of the Crown—Causes which ultimately induced a political Ferment, and induced the savage Character of the Revolution.—P. 32—61.

## CHAPTER II.

### CAUSES IN FRANCE WHICH PREDISPOSED TO REVOLUTION.

Proximate Causes of the Revolution—Progressive Increase of Wealth among the Lower Orders—Decline of Power among the great Feudatories—Philosophy and Literature—Abuses which existed in the Church, Government, State, and Rural Districts—Inordinate Passion for Innovation which succeeded—Character of Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, and his early Ministers—Turgot, Necker, Malesherbes, Vergennes, Calonne—Assembly of Notables—Contests with the Parliament—Convocation of the States-General—Duplication of the Tiers-Etat—General Election—Difference between the Love of Freedom and Passion for Power—Causes which rendered the Revolutionists triumphant.—P. 61—93.

## CHAPTER III.

### CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

Opening of the States-General—Views and Efforts of the different Parties—Composition of the Assembly—First Step of the Revolutionists is to combine the different Orders into one Body—Tennis Court Oath—They succeed in the attempt—All attempts to form a mixed Constitution thereafter fail—Revolt of the Army—Vigorous Measures resolved on by the Court—Storming of the Bastille—Triumph of the Populace—Precipitate measures of the Assembly—Abandonment of the Feudal Rights—Proclamation of the Rights of Man—General anarchy in the kingdom—Irruption of the Mob into the palace of Versailles—The Royal Family brought captive to Paris.—P. 94—138.

## CHAPTER IV.

### FROM THE REVOLT AT VERSAILLES TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

Rapid advance of the Revolution—Immense changes of the Constituent Assembly—Division of France into Departments—Confiscation of Church Property—Universal suffrage—Abolition of Titles of Honour—Establishment of National Guards—Change of the Law of Inheritance—Clubs in the capital—General Emigration—Junction of Mirabeau to the Court—His Death—King's Flight to Varennes—His arrest there, and subsequent impeachment—Revolt in the Champ-de-Mars—Change in the Policy of the Constituent Assembly, as it approached its termination—Its Closing—and Summary of the Changes it introduced, and their Effects. P. 139—176.

## CHAPTER V.

## FROM THE OPENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO THE FALL OF THE MONARCHY.

Opening of the Legislative Assembly—State of parties at its commencement—Severe decrees against the emigrants and nonjuring clergy—Accession of the Girondists to power—They determine to precipitate France into hostilities—Dumouriez—his character—Declaration of War—Insurrection in St. Domingo—Tumult in the Tuileries on 28th June—First appearance of Napoléon—Failure of La Fayette to support the throne—A revolt is organized by the Girondists—Proclamation by the Duke of Brunswick, and invasion by the Allies—Revolt of the 10th August—Massacre of the Swiss—Arrest and imprisonment of the King and Royal Family.—P. 177—213.

## CHAPTER VI.

## FRENCH REPUBLIC—FROM THE DETHRONEMENT TO THE DEATH OF LOUIS.

Violent Measures which immediately followed the overthrow of the throne—Fall and Flight of La Fayette—Character of the Revolutionary Leaders—Danton—Marat—Robespierre—Institution of the Revolutionary Tribunal—Massacre in the Prisons—Termination of the Legislative Assembly—Election for, and Character of, the Convention—Change in the Calendar—Character and Contests of the Girondists and Jacobins—Establishment of a completely Democratic Constitution—Impeachment and Acquittal of Marat and Robespierre—Preparations for the Trial of Louis—His Trial and Condemnation—Dignified Conduct in his last days, and Execution.—P. 214—256.

## CHAPTER VII.

## STATE OF EUROPE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR.

State and relative Struggle of the European Monarchies at the Commencement of the War—Great-Britain—Its Strength, Resources, and Parties—Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Burke—Austria—Revolt in its Flemish Dominions—Its Military Resources—Prussia—Russia—Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, and Italy—Diplomatic Negotiations of the European Powers prior to the commencement of War—Situation and Termination of the Contest between Austria, Russia, and Turkey—Ambitious views of the Northern Powers on Poland—Approximation towards a League against France—Declaration of Mantua, and of Pilnitz—The Plan of attacking France is abandoned by the Allies—but the Revolutionists resolve on War—Strict Neutrality of England after Hostilities began—She is at length drawn into the Contest—Preparations for War in Great-Britain, and Measures of France which rendered it unavoidable.—P. 257—301.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1792.

State of the French Armies at the commencement of hostilities—Character of the Duke of Brunswick, and Plans of the Allies for the Invasion of the Republic.—They cross the Frontier, and meet with rapid and unexpected Success—Are arrested at Valmy by Dumouriez—Action there—Secret Causes of their Retreat—Siege of Lille—Fall of Mayence—Invasion of Flanders—Battle of Jemappes—Advance of the Republicans to the Meuse and the Scheldt—Oppression of the Revolutionary Agents in Belgium.—War in Savoy and Nice—Conclusion of the Campaign on the Rhine—Its chequered Fortune and disastrous Consequences.—P. 302—334.

# PREFACE.

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**THE History of Europe, during the French Revolution, naturally divides itself into four periods :—**

The first, commencing with the Convocation of the States-General in 1789, terminates with the execution of Louis, and the establishment of a Republic in France, in 1793. This period embraces the history and vast changes of the Constituent Assembly ; the annals of the Legislative Assembly ; the revolt and overthrow of the throne on the 10th August ; the trial and death of the King. It traces the changes of public opinion, and the fervour of innovation, from their joyous commencement to that bloody catastrophe, and the successive steps by which the nation was led from the transports of general philanthropy to the sombre ascendant of sanguinary ambition.

The second opens with the strife of the Girondists and the Jacobins ; and, after recounting the fall of the latter body, enters upon the dreadful era of the Reign of Terror, and follows out the subsequent struggles of the now exhausted factions till the establishment of a regular military government, by the suppression of the revolt of the National Guard of Paris, in October, 1795. This period embraces the commencement of the war ; the immense exertions of France during the campaign in 1793 ; the heroic contest in la Vendée ; the last efforts of Polish independence under Kosciusko ; the conquest of Flanders and Holland ; and the scientific manœuvres of the campaign of 1795. But its most interesting part is the internal history of the Revolution ; the heart-rending sufferings of persecuted virtue ; and the means by which Providence caused the guilt of the Revolutionists to work out their own deserved and memorable punishment.

The third, commencing with the rise of Napoleon, terminates with the seizure of the reins of power by that extraordinary man, and the first pause in the general strife by the Peace of Amiens. It is singularly rich in splendid achievements, embracing the Italian campaigns of the French hero, and the German ones of the Archduke Charles ; the battles of St. Vincent, Camperdown, and the Nile ; the expedition to Egypt, the wars of Suwarrow in Italy, and Massena on the Alps ; the campaigns of Marengo and Hohenlinden ; the Northern Coalition, with its dissolution by the victory of Copenhagen ; the conquests of the English in India, and the expulsion of the French from Egypt. During this period, the democratic passions of France had exhausted themselves, and the nation groaned under a weak but relentless military despotism, whose external disasters and internal severities prepared

all classes to range themselves round the banners of a victorious chieftain.

The fourth opens with brighter auspices to France, under the firm and able government of Napoleon, and terminates with his fall in 1815. Less illustrated than the former period by his military genius, it was rendered still more memorable by his resistless power and mighty achievements. It embraces the campaigns of Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland; the destruction of the French navy at Trafalgar; the rise of the desperate struggle in Spain; and the gallant, though abortive, efforts of Austria in 1809; the degradation and extinction of the Papal authority; the slow but steady growth of the English military power in the Peninsula, and the splendid career of Wellington; the general suffering under the despotism of France; the memorable invasion of Russia; the convulsive efforts of Germany in 1813; the last campaign of Napoleon, the capture of Paris, and his final overthrow at Waterloo.

The two first periods illustrate the consequences of democratic ascendancy upon the civil condition; the two last their effect upon the military struggles and external relations of nations. In both, the operation of the same law of nature may be discerned, for the expulsion of a destructive passion from the frame of society, by the efforts which it makes for its own gratification; in both, the principal actors were overruled by an unseen power, which rendered their vices and ambition the means of ultimately effecting the deliverance of mankind. Generations perished during the vast transition, but the law of nature was unceasing in its operation; and the same principle which drove the government of Robespierre through the Reign of Terror to the 9th of Thermidor, impelled Napoleon to the snows of Russia and the rout of Waterloo. "*Les hommes agissent,*" says Bossuet, "*mais Dieu les mène.*" The illustrations of this moral law compose the great lesson to be learned from the eventful scenes of this mighty drama.

The two first periods form the subject of the first and second volumes. The two last will be embraced in those which are to follow.

A subject so splendid in itself, so full of political and military instruction, replete with such great and heroic actions, adorned by so many virtues, and darkened by so many crimes, never yet fell to the lot of an historian. During the twenty-five years of its progress, the world has gone through more than five hundred years of ordinary existence; and the annals of Modern Europe will be sought in vain for a parallel to that brief period of anxious effort and chequered achievement.

Although so short a time has elapsed since the termination of these events, the materials which have been collected for their elucidation have already become, beyond all precedent interesting and ample. The great and varied ability which, since the general peace, has been brought to bear upon political and historical subjects in France, has produced, besides many regular Histories of extraordinary talent, a crowd of Memoirs of various authority, but throwing, upon the whole,

the fullest light on the manners, feelings, and sufferings of those troubled times. The previous state of France, with the moral, political, and financial causes which brought about the Revolution, are fully developed in the able works of Rivarol, Necker, and Madame de Staël, and the luminous financial statements of Calonne, Necker, and Arthur Young. Nor are the materials for the history of the convulsion itself less abundant. On the one hand the faithful and impartial Narrative of M. Toulangeon, with the profound works of Mignet and Thiers, have done ample justice to the Republican side; while, on the other, the elaborate Histories of Lacretelle and La Baume, with the detached Narratives of Chateaubriand, Beauchamps, and Bertrand de Molleville, have fully illustrated the sufferings of the Royalists during the progress of the Revolution. The singular and interesting events of Poland are fully detailed in the able Narrative of Rulhière, and the eloquent pages of Salvandy. But the most interesting record of those times is to be found in the contemporary Memoirs by the principal sufferers during their continuance, the best of which are to be met with in the great collection, published at Paris, of *Revolutionary Memoirs*, extending to sixty-six volumes, and embracing, among other authentic narratives, those of Bailly, Rivarol, Riouffe, Barbaroux, Buzot, Condorcet, Madame Campan, Madame Roland, Madame de Larochejaquelein, Cléry, Hue, Jarnot, Sapinaud, Thureau, de Bonchamps, Doppet, Abbé Guillon, Abbé Morellet, Count de Ségur, General Kleber, M. de Puisaye, and many others. The *Papiers inédits de Robespierre*, and *Correspondance du Comité de Salut public*, lately published at Paris, are full of new and valuable information. In the graphic *History of the Convention*, too, recently published in the same capital, many vivid and striking pictures are to be found evidently drawn from life; while the admirable sketches of Dumont, Brissot, and Mounier convey the most faithful idea of the early leaders of the Assembly, and the singular Memoirs of Levasseur de la Sarthe furnish a portrait of the extreme point of Jacobin extravagance. For the memorable period of the Consulate, and the character of the illustrious men who were assembled round the throne of Napoleon, the Memoirs of Thibaudeau, General Rapp, Bourrienne, Savary, Fouché, Beausset, Caulaincourt, Gohier, and the Duchess of Abrantes, have furnished an inexhaustible mine of information, the authenticity of which may, in general, be judged of with tolerable accuracy, by comparing these different Narratives together. But the most valuable authentic documents during this period are to be found in the ample volumes of the *Moniteur*, the great quarry from which all subsequent compilers have extracted their materials: in the admirable Parliamentary History of France, in forty volumes, by Buchez and Roux, the most interesting portions of which have been well abridged in the *Histoire de la Convention*, in six volumes, by Leonard Gallois; and the *Débats de la Convention*, forming part of the Revolutionary Memoirs.

In military annals the materials are still more ample. The great scientific History of General Jomini, in sixteen volumes, with the lucid Narratives of Marshal Jourdan, Marshal St.-Cyr, and General Dumouriez, leave nothing to be desired for the earlier years of the war; while the genius of Napoleon, as conspicuous in his Memoirs as his Victories, throws a clear light over the Italian Campaigns, and renders it only a matter of regret, that his fidelity as an historian was not equal to his ability as an annalist. The Victories and Conquests of the French Armies, in twenty-six volumes, is a vast magazine of valuable information, though sometimes arranged with the partialities of a too devoted French patriot. The eloquent and graphic Narrative of General Mathieu Dumas, in eighteen volumes, commencing with the first appearance of Suwarrow in Italy, goes through the whole subsequent German campaigns of Napoleon; the Histories of Berthier and Regnier, with the Memoirs of Miot, and the Narrative of Sir Robert Wilson, illustrate the brilliant episode of the Egyptian expedition; while on the side of the Allies the works of the Archduke Charles bear as high a character for truth and integrity as military ability; the eloquent History of M. Botta makes us acquainted with the melancholy catalogue of Italian sufferings; the interesting life of Pius VII, by Artaud, opens up an interesting episode of Christian resignation and firmness in the midst of such a sea of blood; and the Memoirs and Histories of the Prussian writers supply all that was wanting to complete their side of the picture.

For the history of the empire, no works exist of equal ability or authority as those regarding the Revolution; but in many detached publications, the principal facts of importance are to be found. M. Bignon, to whom Napoleon bequeathed, with a large legacy, the duty of compiling the history of his diplomacy, has executed the task, as far at least as 1805, with much ability, though a jaundiced and partial view of Great Britain is to be discerned in all his pages. M. Norvins, in an animated and popular narrative, has comprised the most picturesque events of the Imperial history, while the Abbé Montgaillard, in his elaborate history, in twelve volumes, with equal prejudice on the other side, has accumulated many facts necessary to be understood for a right understanding of the Imperial government. M. Thibaudeau has, with great judgment and impartiality, treated, in his history of the Consulate and Empire, in ten volumes, of the whole of Napoleon's reign. The negotiations with the Court of Rome are to be found recorded in the collections regarding the Italian Transactions, in three volumes, by Schoell, the able work on the Concordates by the Abbé de Pradt, and the valuable Memoirs of Cardinal Pacca; while the chief diplomatic papers of the period are collected in the great works of Martens and Schoell, each in twelve volumes, and in the valuable *Recueil de*

(1) Especially Prince Hardenberg, in his highly interesting and curious *Mémoires d'un homme d'État*,

with the brilliant Sketch, by Sir Robert Wilson, of the Polish campaign in 1807.

*pièces officielles*, in nine volumes, by the latter of these laborious compilers. Goldsmith's *Cour politique et diplomatique de Napoléon*, in seven volumes, contains also a variety of documents many of which the Imperial annalists would willingly bury in oblivion. In the *Biographie universelle*, also, edited by M. Michaud, in fifty-two volumes, and its additions in the *Biographie contemporaine*, now in course of publication at Paris, many interesting particulars regarding the chief characters during the Revolution and the empire are to be found scattered amidst a profusion of other and varied information. The military events of the campaign of 1809 in Germany, are ably recorded in the works of General Pelet, General Stutterheim, and the Archduke John's Account of his Italian Campaign; while the interesting *Life of Hofer*, by Bartholdy, and the brilliant sketch of the war in Tyrol, by Forster, convey as vivid pictures of the astonishing efforts of the inhabitants of that romantic region. <sup>1</sup>

As the contest advanced, and Great Britain was drawn as a principal into the continental war, the materials for a general history became still more ample. The invaluable record of the Duke of Wellington's Despatches, in twelve volumes, contains an authentic narrative of his Indian and Peninsular campaigns, told with equal judgment, penetration, and simplicity; while the Despatches of Marquis Wellesley shed a clear light over the complicated maze of Indian politics, during the splendid period of his administration. Mr. Southey's incomparable *Life of Nelson* contains all that England could desire to have recorded of her naval hero, while his *History of the Peninsular War* exhibits a heart-stirring narrative of that memorable struggle. The delightful Memoirs of Lord Collingwood, with the recent able Lives of Howe, Earl St Vincent, Lord Exmouth, and Sir Henry Blackwood, open up a fund of interesting adventure in our naval transactions. But with the glories of Wellington's campaigns the name of Colonel Napier is indissolubly united: and his glowing pages, and scientific reflections, render it only an object of regret, that political feelings should some times have tinged with undue bias his otherwise impartial military relation. Count Toreno has, in an able work, in six volumes, given the Spanish account of the whole Events of the Peninsular War. If any thing were wanting to complete the picture, it would be found in the animated Narratives of Lord Londonderry, Colonel Jones, Mr. Gleig, Captain Hamilton, and Captain Scherer, whose works exhibit a succession of sketches, so vivid and yet so faithful, that the historian must be insensible, indeed, who does not partake, in some degree, of their enthusiasm.

The French side of the Peninsular War has not been so fully illustrated as their other and more successful campaigns; but the impartial Narrative of General Jomini, with the detached works of General Foy, Count Thiébault, M. Rocca, Marshal St.-Cyr, and Marshal Suchet, throw

(1) Geschichte Andreas Hofer und Beiträge zur Neuere Kriegsgeschichte, von Friedrich Forster. Berlin, 1816.

a clear light over part, at least, of those complicated events. The *Journaux des Sièges dans la Péninsule*, by M. Belmas, recently published in four volumes, by authority of the French Government, at Paris, is a work on this subject of equal splendour and authenticity.

For the memorable occurrences of the Russian Campaign, the eloquent and pictured pages of Count Ségur, Chambray, Larrey, Baron Fain, and La Baume, corrected by the details of General Gourgaud, the scientific sketch of General Jomini (1), and the luminous and impartial Russian Narrative of Colonel Boutourlin, furnish ample materials. The Campaign of 1813, in Germany, has been equally illustrated by the pens of La Baume, Generals Muffling, Gneisenau, and Bulow; Baron Odeleben, Colonel Boutourlin, Baron Fain, Lord Burghersh, and Lord Londonderry; the graphic details of whose works are admirably condensed in the *Précis des Événements Militaires en 1813*, recently published at Leipsic, in French and German; while to the last and greatest Campaign of Napoleon, the vivid descriptions of Beauchamps, La Baume, and the able Narratives of Jomini and Baron Fain, have done ample justice. No historian, however, can have gone over the military events of the Revolutionary War, without having experienced the benefit of the splendid Atlas and accurate description of battles by Kausler, in French and German; a work unparalleled in the annals of art, and which almost brings the theatre of the principal battles of the period before the eyes of the reader. For the subsequent and proudest year of England's achievements, the various accounts of the Battle of Waterloo by Generals Gourgaud, Grouchy, and others, over which the gifted mind of Sir Walter Scott has thrown the light of his genius, furnish inexhaustible resources, and close the work with a ray of glory, to which there is nothing comparable in her long and illustrious annals.

In the description of the theatre of these great events, the author, when he does not quote authority, has in general proceeded on his own observation. This is particularly the case with the fields of Marengo, Novi, Arcola, Rivoli, Lodi, the Brenta, the Trebia, the Tagliamento, Zurich, Ulm, Echmuhl, Hohenlinden, Salzburg, Jena, Austerlitz, Aspern; Wagram, Dresden, Leipsic, the Katzbach, Hanau, Laon, Brienne, Craonne, Soissons, Paris, and Waterloo, the passage of the St.-Bernard, the St.-Gothard, and the Splugen; and, in general, the seat of war in 1796 and 1797, in the Alps of Savoy, Switzerland, Tyrol, and Styria, the theatre of Napoleon's and Suwarrow's campaigns in Italy, those of the Archduke Charles in Germany, the memorable struggle of the Tyrolese in 1809, and of Napoleon's last efforts in the north of Germany and France. He has not deemed it advisable to accompany the work with Maps, as that renders it inaccessible to the generality of readers; but those who are not familiar with the places referred to, will frequently find such a reference of great service.

Every one who investigates the events of this period, must be struck

(1) In his *Life of Napoleon*, a work of extraordinary ability and most impartial observation.



with the great inferiority, generally speaking, of the English historians who treat of the same subject. Till the era of the Peninsular War, when a cluster of gifted spirits arose, there are no writers on English affairs at all comparable to the great historical authors on the Continent. In this dearth of native genius applied to this subject, it is fortunate that a connected narrative of events of varied ability, but continued interest and extensive information, is to be found in the *Annual Register*; that the Life of Mr. Pitt by Gifford embodies with discriminating talent all the views of that great statesman; and his Biography by Tomline leads the reader only to regret that it should terminate at the most eventful crisis of his administration; while the *Parliamentary Debates* through the whole period, edited by Cobbett and Hansard, not only contain most of the statistical details of value to the historian, but all the arguments urged, both in the legislature and elsewhere, for and against the measures of government.

An invaluable mass of statistical information for the whole period is to be found in the *Parliamentary Reports*, compiled with so much care by the Committees of both Houses of Parliament, and admirably digested in the able works of Moreau and Pebrer, as well as the elaborate official compilations of Porter; an immense treasure of important knowledge regarding our colonies is to be found in Martin's valuable *Colonial History*; while, for the details of our naval forces and successes, ample materials are to be found in the minute and elaborate work of Mr. James, and the able but less accurate history of Captain Brenton.

While justice requires, however, that this general praise should be bestowed on the continental writers who have treated of this period, there is one particular which it is impossible to pass over without an expression of a different kind. Of whatever party, nation, or shade of opinion, they seem all at bottom imbued with a profound hatred at this country, and, in consequence, they generally ascribe to the British cabinet a dark or Machiavelian policy, in matters where it is well known to every person in England, and will be obvious to posterity, they were regulated by very different motives, and often proceeded, from inexperience of warlike measures, without any fixed principle at all. The existence of so general and unfounded a prejudice in so many authors of such great and varied ability, would be inexplicable, if we did not reflect on the splendid post which England occupied throughout the whole struggle, and recollect, that in nations equally as individuals, the conferring of obligations too often engenders no other feeling but that of antipathy; that no compliment is so flattering, because none is so sincere, as the vituperation of an adversary who has been inspired with dread; and that though the successful party in a strife is always secretly flattered by the praises bestowed on his antagonists, it is too much to expect of human magnanimity a similar feeling in those to whom fortune has proved adverse.

The events of this period, especially during the earlier years of the Revolution, are so extensive and complicated, that the only way in which it appeared possible to give a clear narrative was to treat in separate chapters of the civil and military transactions, and in many cases to break into different ones the events of a single campaign. In this way, the order of chronology has not, in every instance, been strictly followed; and the same events required to be sometimes mentioned twice over, once as affecting the civil history of the times, and again as forming part of their military annals. This inconvenience, however, was unavoidable, and is a trifling disadvantage, compared to the benefit arising from following out a certain set of transactions, without interruption, to their termination.

In treating of a subject of such extent, embracing so great a variety of events, and involving almost all the points now in dispute between the two great parties who divide the world, it appeared advisable to the author, with a view both to impartiality and historical fidelity, to adopt two rules, which have been faithfully adhered to throughout the whole work.

The first of these was to give on every occasion the authorities by volume and page, from which the statement in the text was taken. This has been carried to an unusual, some may think an unnecessary length, as not only are the authorities for every paragraph invariably given, but in many instances also those for every sentence have been accumulated on the margin. This appeared indispensable in treating of subjects on which men are so much divided, not only by national but political prejudices, and in which every statement, not supported by unquestionable authority, would be liable to be called in question or discredited. For the same reason, care has been taken to quote a preponderance of authority, in every instance where it was possible, from writers on the opposite side from that which an English historian, surveying events with the feelings which attachment to a constitutional monarchy produces, may be supposed to adopt; and the reader will find every fact almost, in the internal history of the Revolution, supported by two Republican, and one Royalist authority; and every event in the military narrative drawn from at least two writers on the part of the French, and one on that of their opponents.

The second rule adopted was to give the arguments for and against every public measure, in the words of those who originally brought them forward, without any attempt at paraphrase or abridgement. This is more particularly the case in the debates of the National Assembly of France, the Parliament of England, and the Council of State under Napoleon; and in effecting the selection, the author has been most forcibly impressed with the prodigious, though often perverted and mistaken ability, which distinguished those memorable discussions. There can be no doubt, that in thus presenting the speeches in the words of the real actors on the political stage, the work has assumed in the first

volumes a dramatic air, unusual at least in modern histories ; but it is the only method by which the spirit and feelings of the moment could be faithfully transmitted to posterity, or justice done to the motives, on either side, which influenced mankind ; and a modern author need not hesitate to follow an example which has been set by Thucydides, Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus.

It seemed advisable to adopt this plan for another reason. The course of a Revolution is so completely at variance with the ordinary tenor of human events, and the motives which then influence men are so different from those which in general obtain an ascendancy, that without the running commentary of their own words, it is impossible to do justice either to their motives, or the great moral lessons to be derived from their history. It is by comparing their words with their actions only, that the deceitful nature of the passions by which they have been misled can be made manifest, and the important truth demonstrated, that nations, not less than individuals, are seduced by alluring expressions ; that it is in the name of humanity that thousands are massacred, and under the banners of freedom that the most grievous despotism is established.

No attempt has been made on any occasion to disguise the real opinion of the author ; but, on the contrary, the conclusions which he thought fairly deducible from the events which were recounted, have been fully given, with the grounds on which they are founded. At the same time, he has exerted himself to the utmost to give the arguments with force and accuracy, which were advanced, or may be advanced, for the opposite side of the question ; and those who do not go along with these conclusions, will find in the context the materials for correcting them.

If there is any one opinion, which, more than another, is impressed on the mind by a minute examination of the changes of the French Revolution, it is the perilous nature of the current into which men are drawn, who commit themselves to the stream of political innovation ; and the great difficulty experienced by those engaged in the contest, even though gifted with the greatest intellect and the most resolute determination, of avoiding the commission of many crimes, amidst the stormy scenes to which it rapidly brings them. It is not difficult to perceive the final cause of this law of Nature, or the important purpose it is intended to serve in the moral government of the world, by expelling from society, through the force of suffering, passions inconsistent with its existence ; but it is a consideration of all others the best calculated to inspire forbearance and moderation, in forming an opinion of the intentions or actions of others placed in such trying and calamitous circumstances, and to exemplify the justice of the sacred precept, " to judge of others as we would wish they should judge of ourselves." Inexorable and unbending, therefore, in his opposition to false principles, it is the duty of the historian of such times, to be lenient and considerate in his judgment of particular men ; and, touching lightly on

the weakness of such as are swept along by the waves, to reserve the weight of his censure for those who put the perilous torrent in motion.

It is the duty of the historian, in recounting the events of a period when great and general public calamities have been produced by abuses of a protracted kind, or the false application of principles which are just to a limited extent, to put in as clear a point of view as possible the consequences of the errors, whether in government or public opinion, which he is engaged in tracing. The annals of Tacitus are justly filled with indignant exclamations against the tyranny of the emperors and the decay of Roman virtue; those of the religious wars, with pictures of the ruinous consequences of religious fanaticism. The history of the French Revolution alternately directs the mind to both the great sources of human oppression. Its earlier years suggest at every page reflections on the evils of political fanaticism, and the terrible consequences of democratic fervour; the latter on the debasing effects of absolute despotism, and the sanguinary march of military ambition.

The composition of the volumes now submitted to the public formed the recreation of many years, during the intervals of laborious professional employments; they were completed before the second French Revolution broke out, or any political changes were contemplated in this country. The progress of domestic, as well as foreign changes, since that event, has given the author no reason to doubt the soundness of the conclusions drawn from the composition of the annals of the first great convulsion, and has inspired him with gloomy presentiments as to the future fate of his country; but no person will more sincerely rejoice than himself, if the course of time shall demonstrate that these fears are ill-founded, and that England has no cause to apprehend danger from innovations which proved so destructive to her more impassioned rival.

Finally, when he looks back to the vast theatre of splendid and heroic achievements which it is the object of these pages to commemorate; when he reflects on the talent which has been exerted in the actions, and the genius which has been displayed in the narratives, which are here passed under review, the author cannot but feel his own inadequacy to so great an undertaking, or avoid giving expression to the feeling, that if the work contains any interest, it is in justice to be ascribed to the virtue, the bravery, or ability of others, and that its numerous defects he can impute to no one but himself.

A. ALISON.

*January 21, 1833.*

# HISTORY OF EUROPE

## FROM THE COMMENCEMENT

### OF THE

# FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### ARGUMENT.

**Importance and Magnificence of the Subject—Comparison of the Era of Napoleon with others in the World—Extraordinary varieties of Character and Events which it exhibited—Causes of this Diversity—Causes of the Early Depression of the Lower Orders, and consequent universality of, and necessity for Slavery—First causes which lead to Freedom—The Independence of Pastoral Life—The Security of Walled Cities—The Protection of Mountain Retreats—Limited extent of Freedom in Ancient Times—Different Policy of the Romans—Its prodigious Effects—Irruption of the Northern Nations—Its great Consequences—Lamentable Prostration of the Vanquished—Separation between the different Classes of Society in Modern Times—First Origin of Representative Governments—Causes which led to it in Modern Europe—They were taken from the Assemblies of the Church—And, in consequence, were universally established in Europe—Fatal defect of the Feudal System—Causes of its Decay—Its Decline in Spain, France, Germany, and England—It was only fitted for a barbarous Age—Progress of Urban Freedom in the South of Europe—Rapid rise of the Urban Civilisation of the Towns of Italy—Their great and patriotic efforts—Causes of their Decline—Decline of Flemish Freedom—Causes which restored Liberty—Influence of Christianity—Art of Printing—Its vast Effects both in Good and Evil—Discovery of Gunpowder—Its Influence on the Progress of Freedom, and in Destroying the Power of the Nobility—Increase of Luxury tended to the same effect—Combination of these Causes in inducing the French Revolution.**

**THERE** are few periods in the history of the world which can be compared, in point of interest and importance, to that which embraces the progress and termination of the French Revolution. In no former age were events of such magnitude crowded together, or interests so momentous at issue between contending nations. From the flame which was kindled in Europe, the whole world has been involved in conflagration; and a new era dawned upon both hemispheres from the effects of its expansion. With the first rise of a free spirit in France, the liberty of North America was established, and its last exertions spread the discordant passion for independence through the wide extent of its Southern Continent. In the midst of a desperate contest in Europe, the British empire in India has unceasingly extended, and the ancient fabric of Hindoo superstition yielded to the force of European civilisation. Though last to be reached by the destructive flame, the power of Russia has been infinitely extended by the contests in which she has been engaged; and the dynasties of Asia can now hardly withstand the arms which the forces of Napoleon were unable to subdue. Assailed by the energy of England on the

south, and by the might of Russia on the north, the desolating reign of Mahometan oppression seems drawing to its close; and from the strife of European war two powers have emerged, which appear destined to carry the blessings of civilisation and the light of religion as far as the arm of conquest can reach, or the waters of the ocean extend.

Comparison of the era of Napoleon with others in the world. In the former history of the world, different eras are to be observed, which have always attracted the attention of men, from the interest of the events which they present, and the importance of the consequences to which they have led. It is in the midst of the greatest struggles of the species, that the fire has been struck which has most contributed to its improvement. In the contest between Grecian freedom and Persian despotism, the genius was elicited which has spread the spirit of philosophy and the charms of art throughout mankind (1); in the severer struggles between the Romans and Carthaginians, that unconquerable spirit was produced, which in half a century extended the Roman empire over the whole surface of the civilised world; it was amidst the first combats between the Mahometans and the Christians that the genius of modern Europe took its rise, and engrafted the refinements of ancient taste on the energy of barbarian valour; from the wars between the Moors and the Spaniards, that the enterprise arose which burst the barriers of ancient knowledge, and opened to modern ambition the wonders of another hemisphere. The era of Napoleon will be ranked by future ages with those of Pericles, of Hannibal, and of the Crusades, not merely from the splendour of the events which it produced, but the magnitude of the effects by which it was followed.

Within the space of twenty years, events were then accumulated, which would have filled the whole annals of a powerful state, in any former age, with instruction and interest. In that brief period were successively presented the struggles of an aged monarchy, and the growth of a fierce democracy; the energy of Republican valour, and the triumphs of Imperial discipline; the pride of barbarian conquest, and the glories of patriotic resistance. In the rapid pages of its history will be found parallels to the long annals of ancient greatness; the genius of Hannibal, and the passions of Gracchus; the ambition of Cæsar, and the splendour of Augustus; the triumphs of Trajan, and the disasters of Julian. The power of France was less durable than that of Rome, only because it was more oppressive; it was more stubbornly resisted, because it did not bring the blessings of civilisation on its wings. Its course was hailed by no grateful nations, its progress marked by no experienced blessings; unlike the beneficent sun of Roman greatness, which shone only to improve, its light, like the dazzling glare of the meteor, "rolled, blazed, destroyed, and was no more."

Extraordinary varieties of character and events which it exhibited. Nor were the varieties of character, which appeared on the scene during those eventful years, less deserving of attention. If the genius displayed was unprecedented, so also was the wickedness; if history has little to show comparable to the triumphs that were gained, it has no parallel to the crimes that were committed. The terrible severity of Danton, the cowardly cruelty of Robespierre, are as unexampled as the military genius of Napoleon, or the naval career of Nelson. If France may, with reason, pride herself upon the astonishing accumulation of talent which was brought to bear upon the fortunes of the state during the progress of the Revolution, she must share the disgrace of the inhuman crimes which were committed by its leaders, and borne by its supporters among the people.

(1) Polyb. l. i. c. 1.

It is the peculiar duty of the historian to preserve, for future admiration, the virtues which adorned, and to consign to eternal execration the vices which disgraced that eventful age :—"Exsequi sententias haud institui, nisi insignes per honestum, aut notabili dedecore; quod præcipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur, utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit. Ceterum tempora illa adeo infecta, et adulatione sordida fuere, ut non modo priores civitatis, quibus claritudo sua obsequiis protegenta erat, sed omnes consulares, magna pars eorum qui prætura functi, multique etiam pedarii senatores, certatim exsurgerent, fœdaque et nimia censerent (1)."

The peculiar virtues and character of all the European nations were eminently exemplified during those disastrous years. The obstinate hostility of the Spaniards, the enthusiastic valour of the French, the ardent spirit of the Prussians, the persevering steadiness of the Austrians, the devoted courage of the Russians, the freeborn bravery of the English, have been successively put to the test. The boasted glories of Louis XIV sink into insignificance compared to the triumphs of Napoleon; and the victories of Marlborough produced less important consequences than those of Vittoria and Waterloo. Since the Western World was arrayed against the Eastern on the shores of Palestine, no such assemblages of armed men have been seen as those which followed the standards of Napoleon; and the hordes which Attila displayed on the plains of Chalons, were less formidable than those which Alexander led from the deserts of Scythia.

Nor were the intellectual exertions of this animating period less conspicuous than its warlike achievements. In this bloodless contest, the leaders of civilisation, the lords of the earth and the sea, outstripped all other states. The same age which witnessed the military glories of Wellington and Napoleon, beheld the completion of astronomical investigation by Laplace, and the hidden recesses of the heart unfolded by Sir Walter Scott. Earth told the history of its revolutions through the remains buried in its bosom, and the secrets even of material composition, yielded to the powers of philosophical analysis. Sculpture revived from its ashes under the taste of Canova, and the genius of Torvaldsen again charmed the world by the fascinations of design; architecture displayed its splendour in the embellishments of the French metropolis, and the rising capital of Russia united to the solidity of Egyptian materials the delicacy of Grecian taste (2). Even the rugged ridges of the Alps yielded to the force of scientific enterprise, and the barriers of nature were smoothed by the efforts of human perseverance; while the genius of Britain added a new element to the powers of art, and made fire the instrument of subduing the waves.

Effects so various could not have arisen from the ordinary course of human events. The talent developed was too great, the wickedness committed too appalling, to be explained on the usual principles of human nature. It seemed rather as if some higher powers had been engaged in a strife in which man was the visible instrument; as if the demons of hell had been let loose to scourge mankind, and the protection of Heaven for a time withdrawn from virtue, to subject its firmness to the severest test. The fancy of antiquity would have peopled the scene with hostile deities, supporting unseen the contests of armies; the severer genius of Christianity beheld in it the visible interposition of Almighty Power, to punish the sins of a corrupted world.

Causes of  
this diversity.

There was nothing, however, supernatural in the events of that momentous age. The magnitude of the effects produced arose en-

(1) Tac. Annal. iii. 65.

(2) Clark's Travels, xi. 391, 392.

tirely from the intensity of the feelings which were roused; the extremes of virtue and vice which were exhibited, from the force of the incitements to the former, and the temptations to the latter, which were presented. The interests which were at stake were not the loss of provinces or the retreat of armies, but the fate of whole ranks in society, and the lives of multitudes, from the throne to the cottage; the passions which were called into action, not the momentary excitation of national rivalry, or the casual burst of hostile feeling, but the mutual and deep-rooted hatred which had been gathering strength from the foundation of the world. The friends of liberty inhaled their spirit from the example of antiquity, and drank deep of the fountains which the writers of Greece and Rome had opened; the supporters of the throne struck the profounder chords of religion and loyalty, and summoned to their aid the precepts of Catholic faith and the honour of modern nobility. The fervour of ancient eloquence, the recollections of classical achievement, warmed the former; the feelings of hereditary devotion, the glories of chivalrous descent, animated the latter. It was not the ripple of a minute that burst upon the shore, but the long swell of the Atlantic, wafted from distant realms, and heaved on the bosom of remote antiquity.

The struggle between the high and the low, the throne and the people, has subsisted from a remote period; but it is only in modern times, that the principles of general freedom have been established, or those powers brought into collision, which had been mutually gaining strength from the earliest times.

Causes of the early depression of the lower orders. How just soever it may appear to us, that the welfare and interests of the people should be protected from the aggressions of the powerful, there is nothing more certain than that such is not the primitive or original state of society. The varieties of human character, the different degrees of intellectual or physical strength with which men are endowed, the consequences of accident, misfortune, or crime, the destitution and helpless state of the poor in the infancy of civilisation, early introduce the distinction of ranks, and precipitate the lower orders into that state of dependence on their superiors which is known by the name of slavery. This institution, however odious its name has now justly become, is not an evil when it first arises; it only becomes such by being continued in circumstances different from those in which it originated, and in times when the protection it affords to the poor is no longer required.

Consequent universality of slavery. The universality of slavery in the early ages of mankind, is a certain indication that it is unavoidable, from the circumstances in which the human species is every where placed, in the first stages of society. Where capital is unknown, property insecure, and violence universal, there is no security for the lower classes but in the protection of their superiors; and the sole condition on which this can be obtained is that of slavery. Property in the person and labour of the poor, is the only inducement which can be held out to the opulent to take them under their protection. Compulsion is the only power which can render labour general in the many ages which must precede the influence of artificial wants, or a general taste for its fruits. Humanity, justice, and policy, so powerful in civilized ages, are then unknown, and the sufferings of the destitute are as much disregarded as those of the lower animals. If they belonged to no lord, they would speedily fall a prey to famine or violence. How miserable soever the condition of slaves may be in those unruly times, they are incomparably better off than they would have been if they had incurred the destitution of freedom (1).



The simplicity of rural or patriarchal manners mitigates the severity of an institution which necessity had first introduced. The slaves among the Arabs or the Tartars enjoyed nearly as much happiness as their masters; their occupations, fare, and enjoyments, were nearly the same (1). To this day, the condition of a slave in all the Eastern empires differs but little from that of a domestic servant in modern Europe; and even the enfranchised poor of France and England would find something to envy in the situation of a Russian peasant. Succour in sickness, employment in health, and maintenance in old age, are important advantages even in the best regulated states; during the anarchy of early times, their value is incalculable (2).

There is no instance in the history of the world of the peasantry in a level country, who are solely employed in the labours of agriculture, emancipating themselves, without external aid, from this state of dependence on their superiors. Attached to the soil, weighed down by the toil of cultivation, separated from each other, and limited in the sphere of their observation, ignorant from want of mutual intercourse, and yet destitute of the energy of savage life, they have every where remained, from generation to generation, unable either to combine against violence or to escape from oppression. The inhabitants of Mesopotamia, of Egypt, or of Bengal, like the serfs of Poland, or the boors of Russia in recent times, have continued, from the earliest ages, in the same state of passive and laborious existence.

It is by the aid of other habits, and by the influence of a different state of society, that the first rudiments of freedom have been established among mankind.

First causes which lead to freedom. The first of these causes is to be found in the independence and solitude of the pastoral life. The Arabs, who followed their camels over the sands of Arabia, the Scythians, who wandered over the deserts of Tartary, were subject to no oppression, because they were restrained by no necessity. If the chief of a tribe was guilty of any act of injustice, his subjects had it always in their power to depart with their families and herds, and before a few hours had elapsed, all trace of their route had disappeared in the sand of the desert, or amidst the vegetation of the steppes. Like our first parents on leaving Paradise, the world was all before them, and wherever grass flourished, or water was to be found, they were equally ready to sojourn and increase. From this independence of the shepherd tribes, joined to the boundless extent of the plains which nature had prepared for their reception, have sprung the freedom and energy of the pastoral character; the conquests of the Arabs, and the settlements of the Scythians, have arisen from the same cause of hardihood in their native wilds; and to the roving habits of our forefathers, who spread from the centre of Asia to the shores of the Atlantic, the liberty of modern times is mainly to be ascribed, and all the glories of European civilisation have sprung—the arts of Greece, the arms of Rome, the chivalry of France, and the navy of England.

The security of walled cities The second great source of freedom in human affairs, is to be found in the protection and opulence of walled cities. Amidst the security which they afford, industry is excited by the desire of enjoyment, and capital accumulates from the means of employing it. With the growth of wealth succeeds a consciousness of the independence which it confers; with the extension of property, an aversion to the oppression which might endan-

(1) 'Dominum ac servum, nullis educationis delictis dignoscas. Inter eadem pecora, in eadem humo degant; donec ætas separet ingenues, virtus agnoscat.'—Tacitus *De Mor.* Germ. c. 20.

(2) Park's Travels in Africa, i. 434. Volney's Syria, p. 312. Clark's Travels, i. 901—70.

ger it. The assembly of multitudes awakens a sense of strength; community of interest engenders public feeling, proximity of residence suggests the means of common defence. Amidst the growing wealth and rapid communication of ideas which prevail in commercial cities, the spirit of freedom is awakened, and the hatred to oppression confirmed. From this source the whole liberty of antiquity took its rise; their republics were all cradled in a single city, and confined to the citizens whom it produced; and the names of a state and political body were derived from that of a town, in which alone they were found to exist.

The protection of mountain retreats. The last source of freedom is to be found in the sequestered situation and independent habits of mountaineers. Amid the solitude of the Alps, or the fastnesses of the Himalaya, vigour is called forth by the necessity for exertion, and independence preserved by security from insult. The oppressors of mankind pass unheeding by these cradles of intrepid courage; and attracted by the spoils of more opulent states, leave in their native obscurity the poor and hardy inhabitants of mountainous regions. From generation to generation, accordingly, the same free and independent habits are perpetuated in the mountain tribes of the world; and, while the vigour of conquerors melts in the plains, as Alpine snows under the warmth of a southern sun, the freedom of the mountains is preserved, like their glaciers, in virgin purity, amidst the blasts and the severity of winter.

Limited extent of freedom in ancient times. The freedom of the ancient world expired in the course of ages, from the limited number of those who enjoyed its benefits. This was the chief cause of its decay; but it arose unavoidably from the limited sources from which freedom took its rise in ancient times. Republics, such as Athens or Sparta, where the freemen did not exceed twenty thousand, while the slaves were above four hundred thousand, were not free countries: they were cities, in which a certain portion of the inhabitants, little qualified to exercise them, had acquired exclusive privileges, while they kept the great body of their brethren in a state of servitude (1). Even the philosophers of antiquity, in their speculations concerning a perfect republic, could not go beyond a small territory, ruled by a single city, in which the great body of the people were slaves. The privileged citizens evinced, on every occasion, the strongest repugnance to extending their rights to others; and, in consequence, were exposed, on the first reverse, to the defection of all their allies. Hence the liberty of the Grecian republics was short-lived and precarious. The ruling class became corrupted from the influence of prosperity, or the seductions of wealth; and no infusion of energy took place from the lower, to renovate their strength or supply their place: the political body depended upon the exertions of a single class, and with its virtue the public freedom expired. The splendour of success, or the efforts of genius, might retard the approach of disaster, or conceal the growth of corruption; but the season of maturity stripped the tree of its foliage, and the trunk, fed by no perennial fountain, and invigorated by no ascending nourishment, yielded without resistance to the blasts of winter (2).

Different policy of the Romans. Its prodigious effects. With a magnanimity so extraordinary, and so contrary to the ordinary principles of human nature, that it may almost be ascribed to Divine interposition, the Romans, from the foundation of their republic, admitted all the subjects of conquered states to a share of their pri-

(1) Athens contained, at its greatest period, 21,000, Sparta, 39,000 citizens.—GRÆCÆ, i. 383.

(2) Plutarch in Pericles, Gib. i. 53, 54, and 383.

Arist. de Rep. i. 4, 5. Mitford, ix. 10, 11. Staël, Rév. Franç. i. 10, 11.

vileges, and they received in return the empire of the world. From the first junction of the Romans and Sabines, to the final extension, by the Emperor Antoninus, of the privileges of Roman citizens to the whole civilized world, this policy was steadily pursued; unshaken by success, unsubdued by disaster. The Romans felt the benefit of this magnanimous conduct, in the steady adherence of their allies during the severest periods of national misfortune (1). Even the defeats of the Trebia and Thrasymene were not followed by the defection of a single ally, nothing but the overthrow of Cannæ shook their fidelity; while the first serious disaster of Carthage, which confined its privileges to its own citizens, stript the Republic of all its subsidiary forces. The steady growth, unequalled extent, and long duration of the Roman empire, proves the wisdom of their political system; but it fell a prey at length to the dreadful evil of domestic slavery (2). It was this incurable evil, which, even in the time of Augustus, thinned the ranks of the legions; which, in process of time, filled the armies with mercenary soldiers, and the provinces with great proprietors; which subsequently rendered it impracticable to raise a military force in the southern provinces of the empire, and at length consumed the vitals of the state, and left nothing to withstand the barbarians, but nobles who wanted courage to defend their property, and slaves who were destitute of property to rouse their courage (3).

First irruption of the northern nations. Its great effects.

The barbarians who overthrew the Roman empire, brought with them from their deserts the freedom and energy of savage life.

Amidst the expiring embers of civilized institutions, they spread the flames of barbarian independence; on the decayed stock of

urban liberty, they engrafted the vigorous shoots of pastoral freedom. From their exploits, the thrones, the monarchs, and the nobles of Europe, took their rise; in their customs is to be found the source of the laws and institutions of modern times; in their settlements, the origin of the peculiar character by which the different European nations are distinguished.

Lamentable prostration of the vanquished.

Their conquests were not, in the end, a mere change of government, or the substitution of one race of monarchs for another; but a total subversion of the property, customs, and institutions of the vanquished people. Their cities were destroyed, their temples ruined, their movables plundered, their estates confiscated (4). The daughters of the greatest among the conquered were compelled to receive husbands from the leaders of their enemies, while those of the inferior classes were exposed to the grossest insults, or driven in despair to the protection of convents; and the youth of the other sex, born to splendid possessions, were sold as slaves, or compelled to labour as serfs on the lands which their fathers held as proprietors. To such extremes of distress were the inhabitants of the vanquished states sometimes reduced, that they voluntarily submitted to bondage as the

(1) The Roman citizens, in the time of Paulus Emilius, amounted to 337,000 persons capable of bearing arms; the admission of the Italian allies by Caius Gracchus, swelled their numbers to 4,163,000 in the time of Augustus; and the extension of the franchise to the Gauls augmented them to 6,900,000. The Emperor Antoninus, by a general edict, extended the privilege to the whole empire. [Plutarch, in Caius Gracchus, and Paulus Emilius. Ferg. v. iii. Gib. i. 78. Tac. Ann. xi. 24.]

(2) The slaves in the Roman empire were extremely numerous; those of a single family were ascertained, on a melancholy occasion, to amount to 400 souls; but no general enumeration or peculiar

garb was allowed, lest it should be discovered how few the freemen were in comparison to their number.—Tacitus.

(3) Polyb. iii. c. 9, et 6. Ferg. Rome, v. 277. Gib. iii. 66, vii. 212, v. 263. Sismon. Hist. de France, i. 82.

(4) So far was this universal system of disinheriting carried after the Norman Conquest, that, by a general enactment, inserted in Domesday Book, all alienations by Saxons, subsequent to the Conquest of William, and all titles to estates not derived from him, and registered in his books, were declared null.—Thierry, ii. p. 278.

price of life, and sought in slavery the only protection which could be obtained from the violence by which they were surrounded (1).

It was not, however, at once or by any sudden act of violence, that this complete transfer of property from the vanquished to the victors took place. The settlements of the Northern nations in the provinces of the Roman empire, did not resemble the conquests either of the Roman legions or the armies of modern Europe, but were rather akin, though more violent, to the gradual inroad which the Irish poor have effected into the provinces of Western Britain in these times. Wave after wave succeeded, before the whole country was occupied; one province was overrun for a whole generation before another was invaded; and a more equitable division of goods between the natives and the conquerors at first took place, than could have been expected where power was at the disposal of such rude barbarians. Sometimes a half, sometimes a third, of the vanquished lands, were left in the hands of the old proprietors; and although the portion was abridged by each successive inroad of conquerors, yet it was several centuries before the transfer was completely effected; and some remnants of the ancient free, or allodial tenure, have in all the European monarchies survived the whole changes of the middle ages. Gradually, however, the work of spoliation was extended; the depressed condition and timid character of the native inhabitants, rendered them incapable of resisting the inroads of their fierce neighbours; numbers surrendered their properties for the benefit of feudal protection; the daughters of the vanquished, if entitled to lands, almost all chose their husbands from the sons of the conquerors, or were compelled to do so by the power of the sovereign; and at length the change was generally effected, and the land had almost every where passed from the Romans to the Northern proprietors. Before the 10th century, the change was complete (2).

Separation  
thence be-  
tween the  
classes of  
society in  
modern  
times.

The lamentable state of weakness and decay into which the Roman empire had fallen in the latter ages of its existence, in consequence of the universality of slavery in all its provinces, rendered the people totally incapable of preventing this general spoliation. They submitted, almost without resistance, to every invader, and could hardly be induced to take up arms, even by the most incessant foreign and domestic aggressions. Hence arose a total separation of the higher and lower orders, and an entire change in the habits, occupations, and character of the different ranks of society. From the free conquerors of the Roman provinces have sprung the noble and privileged classes of modern Europe; from their enslaved subjects, the numerous and degraded ranks of peasants and labourers (3). The equality and energy of pastoral life stamped a feeling of pride and independence on the descendants of the conquerors, which in many countries is yet undiminished; the misery and degradation of the vanquished rivetted chains about their necks, which were hardly loosened for a thousand years.

In this original separation of the different ranks of society, consequent upon the irruption of the Franks into Gaul, is to be found the remote cause of the evils which induced the FRENCH REVOLUTION. But many ages were destined to elapse, before the conflicting interests thus created came into collision; and it was by the gradual agency of several concurring causes, that the energy was restored to the mass of the people, which had been lost

(1) Thierry. ii. 24, 26, 27, 109, 101. *Siam. Hist.*  
*de France*, i. 277.

(2) Guizot, *Essais sur l'Hist. de France*, 330, 252,  
230, 304. Thierry, *Essais sur l'Histoire*, 87, 99.

(3) Thierry, *Introduction*, i. 8, 9. *Siam. France*,  
i. 74, 87.

amidst the tranquillity of Roman servitude and the violence of feudal oppression.

When the lands of the vanquished people were at length completely divided, and the military followers of the victorious invaders had completely overspread the conquered territory, the nobles despised their subjects too much to court their assistance in periods of danger. Shut up in castles, and surrounded by their own military retainers, they neither required the aid nor felt for the sufferings of their bondsmen. The ravages of the Normans, the cruelty of the Huns, excited but little compassion while it was wreaked only on the slaves of the country; and the baron, secure within his walls, beheld with indifference his villages in flames, and the long files of weeping captives who were carried off from beneath his ramparts by the desolating invaders. During these long ages of feudal anarchy, the lower orders neither improved in courage nor rose in importance; the lapse of time served only to increase their degradation, by extinguishing the remembrance of better times (1).

First origin of representative government. But the conquests of the Northern nations led to one important consequence—the establishment of representative governments in the provinces of the empire. The liberty of antiquity, cradled in single cities, was confined to the citizens who were present on the spot, and could take an active part in the public deliberations. Though the Romans, with unexampled wisdom, extended the rights of citizenship to the conquered provinces, yet the idea of admitting them to a share of the representation never occurred to their minds; and the more important privileges of a citizen could only be exercised by actually repairing to the metropolis. The unavoidable consequence of this was, that the populace of the capital, in all the free states of antiquity, exercised the principal powers of government; from their passions the public measures took their rise; and by their tumults revolutions in the state were effected. Hence the violence, the anarchy, and the inconstancy by which their history was so often distinguished, and which, though concealed amid the blaze of ancient eloquence, the searching eye of modern history has so fully illustrated (2).

The Northern nations, on the other hand, who established themselves on the ruins of the Roman empire, were actuated by different feelings, and influenced by opposite habits. The liberty which they brought with them from their woods, or which had sprung up amidst the independence of the desert, knew no locality, and was confined to no district. The whole nation was originally free; and that freedom was equally preserved and valued in the cultivated plain as in the desert wilds. When the military followers of a victorious chief were settled in a province they had conquered, they still regarded their leader with somewhat of their original independence; and he was distinguished from them only by the preeminence of his rank in actual war, and the magnitude of his allotment of the vanquished lands. The sea-kings, who so long desolated the maritime provinces of France and England, and the Anglo-Saxons, who laid the foundation of the English empire, possessed hardly any authority over their followers but during the period of actual service. The Franks who, under Clovis, established the French monarchy, owed but a nominal allegiance to their chief. Elevated on the shields of their followers, their leaders owed their dignity to the voluntary choice of their fellow-soldiers; and, even in moments of triumph, the meanest soldiers were not afraid of reminding them of the tenure by which they held their authority (3).

(1) Thierry, i. 162, ii. 96. Gib. x. 242.

(2) Mitford's Greece, ix. 68, 87.

(3) Thierry, ii. 321. Hume, i. 264. Turner's

Anglo-Saxons, i. 97. Sismondi, France, i. 272. Hallam, i. 153.

Causes which led to It in modern Europe. It was the settlement of brave and energetic nations in rich and highly cultivated provinces, which led to the separation of the victors over the conquered districts, and the establishment of an independent aristocracy amidst the decaying wealth of ancient servitude. Had the country been less richly cultivated, the followers of the northern invaders would have been lost amidst the seductions of cities, or returned, after a predatory incursion, to the solitudes which protected them from pursuit. It was the discovery of rich and cultivated districts, tenanted by a skilful but unwarlike people, which encouraged the rural settlement of the conquerors, which rendered the protection of cities unnecessary, and provided a counterpoise to their allurements; and, by establishing the invaders in a permanent manner in the country, long preserved their manners from corruption, and rendered the servitude of the Roman empire one remote cause of the liberty of modern Europe.

On the first settlement of the victorious nations, the popular assemblies of the soldiers were an actual convocation of the military array of the kingdom. William the Conqueror summoned his whole military followers to assemble at Winchester, and sixty thousand men obeyed the mandate, the poorest of whom held property adequate to the maintenance of a horseman and his attendants. The meetings of the *Champ-de-Mai* were less a deputation from the followers of Clovis, than an actual congregation of their numbers in one vast assembly. But, in process of time, the burden of travelling from a distance was severely felt, and the prevalence of sedentary habits rendered the landed proprietors unwilling to undertake the risk, or expense, of personal attendance on the great council of the state. Hence the introduction of PARLIAMENTS, or REPRESENTATIVE LEGISLATURES, the greatest addition to the cause of liberty which modern times has afforded; which combine the energy of a democratic with the caution of an aristocratic government; which temper the turbulence and allay the fervour of cities, by the slowness and the tenacity of country life; and which, where the balance is duly preserved in the composition of the assembly, provide, in the variety of its interests and habits, a permanent check upon the violence or injustice of a part of its members (1).

They are taken from the assemblies of the Church. It is doubtful, however, whether these causes, powerful as they are, would have led to the introduction of that great and hitherto unknown change in government, which the representative system introduced, had not a model existed for imitation, in which, for a series of ages, it had been fully established. The councils of the Church had so early as the sixth century, introduced over all Christendom the most perfect system of representation: delegates, from the most remote dioceses in Europe and Asia, had there assembled to deliberate on the concerns of the faithful; and every Christian priest, in the humblest station, had some share in the formation of those great assemblies, by whom the general affairs of the Church were to be regulated. The formation of parliaments, under the representative system, took place in all the European states in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The industry of antiquaries may carry the Wittenagemot, or actual assembly of leading men, a few generations further back; but six centuries before, the councils of Nice and Antioch had exhibited perfect models of an universal system of representation, embracing a wider sphere than the whole extent of the Roman empire. There can be no doubt that it was this example, so generally known, and of such powerful authority, which determined the

imitation of the other members of the community, where they had any common concerns which required deliberation; and thus, to the other blessings which civilisation owes to Christianity, are to be added those inestimable advantages which have flowed from the establishment of the representative system (1).

Universally established in Europe. In every part of Europe, accordingly, where the Northern conquerors established themselves, the rudiments of representative government are to be found. In all, the barons settled in the country, and the legislative authority was vested in assemblies of their representatives, who, under the name of Wittenagemots, Parliaments, States-General, or Cortes, were brought together at stated periods to deliberate on the public concerns. So naturally did this institution spring from the habits and situations of the military settlers, and so little did its first founders anticipate the important consequences which have flowed from its adoption, that the right of sending representatives to Parliament was generally considered not as a privilege but a burden; and that share in the legislature, which is now so much the object of contention and desire, was originally viewed as an oppressive duty, for which those who exercised it were entitled to indemnification from their more fortunate brethren. The barons, however, were long animated by a strong feeling of independence, and in every part of Europe, at their first establishment, diffused the principle of resistance to arbitrary authority. In Spain, accordingly, France, Germany, and Flanders, we find them manfully resisting the encroachments of the sovereign, and in all, the same privileges of not being taxed without their consent, and of concurring in the acts of the legislature, early established (2).

Fatal defects of the feudal system. In all these states, however, the feudal system was subject to the same fatal defect, that it made no provision for the interests or welfare of the great body of the people. Like all other institutions, in which this defect existed, it involved in itself the principles of its own decay. The conquerors of the Roman empire deemed the inhabitants of the provinces in which they settled wholly unworthy of notice; and, even in Magna Charta, while the privileges of the barons and the freemen were anxiously provided for, no stipulation of any importance was made for the extensive class of husbandmen or slaves. The decline in the virtue of the barbarous settlers was in most instances extremely rapid, and the succeeding wave of invaders generally found the first set lost in sloth or destroyed by luxury. In the miserable and degraded barons, who deserted Roderick in his contest with the Moorish invaders of Spain, we can hardly discern a trace of resemblance to the impetuous warriors, who, under Attila, penetrated into that secluded province of the Roman empire; and the Moorish conquerors were in a few centuries reduced to the same degraded state from the operation of the same causes. Even the genius and triumphs of Charlemagne were unequal to renovating the mixture of barbarism and effeminacy of which he formed the head; and humanity never appeared in a more pusillanimous or degraded form than among the Rois Fainéans, the unworthy successors of Charles Martel, and of the barons who died for the liberty of Christendom on the field of Tours. All the efforts of Charlemagne for the improvement of his people, were thwarted by the limited number of free inhabitants whom they contained. A few thousand freemen were there to be found scattered among as many millions of slaves; and, in his own lifetime, he had the misfortune of beholding the progress of corruption even among

(1) Salvandy, *Hist. de la Pologne*, i. 105, 106. Guizot, *Essais sur l'Hist. de France*. Thierry, *Essais sur l'Histoire de France*.

(2) Hallam, i. 253; and ii. 67, 130. Villaret, 125. Hume, ii. 116, 271. *Ersk. Inst.* i. 3. Comines, iv c. 13. Du Clerq. 389.

the troops whom he had led to victory. The same cause blasted all the beneficent institutions of Alfred for the protection and improvement of his country, and exposed the English nation, for so long a period, to desolation and ruin from a small body of Northern invaders (1).

Effects of the private wars of the nobles. The private wars of the nobles with each other, were the first circumstance which renewed the courage and revived the energy of the feudal barons. It is to this cause, joined to the fortification of the castles, and the constant use of arms by the retainers of the land-owners, that the restoration of the military courage of France is to be ascribed. The Spanish barons were trained to courage in the stern school of necessity, and regained, in the mountains of Galicia, the valour which their conquerors were losing amidst the luxuries of Cordova. The English military spirit, which had decayed from the same causes, was restored by the private wars of the nobles during the reign of Stephen; and, amidst the havoc and ruin of the country, that courage was elicited which was destined to lay the foundation of British liberty in a happier age (2).

Causes of the decay of the feudal liberty. But the feudal liberty was at length destroyed by the change of manners, and the natural progress of opulence. Being confined to a limited class of society, it expired with the virtue of those who alone were interested in its defence; conferring little upon the great body of the people, it derived nothing from the talents which lay buried in their bosom. Wealth enervated its possessors, and no inferior class existed to supply their place; the rich became corrupted, and the poor did not cease to be slaves. The progress was different in different states, but in all the result was the same. The kingdoms both of Aragon and Castile were governed, in their early history, by more limited monarchs than the Plantagenets of England, and their nobles did not yield to the barons of Runnymede in zeal for the preservation of their privileges; but it was in vain that they extorted concessions from their sovereigns, and confirmed them on occasion of every renewal of the coronation oath. Its decline in Spain and France. The spirit of freedom, and with it the liberties of the nation, died away upon the decay of the feudal aristocracy, from the selfishness and degradation of the great body of the people. The Cortes maintained its independent spirit, and the "Great Privilege," the Magna Charta of Aragon, was never repealed; but the cities neglected sending representatives to its assemblies, and many suffered their right to a place in its deliberations to expire. The nobles became attached to the splendour of a court, and, with the forms of a limited, Spain became a despotic monarchy (3).

In France, the nobility, during the period of their feudal vigour, reduced the crown to nearly the same limited sway as prevailed in England, insomuch that, for nearly half a century, it was a general opinion, confirmed by several solemn acts of the throne, that no tax could be levied without the consent of the Three Estates. But the skeleton of a free government perished with the decay of feudal manners. The influence of the crown, and the attractions of a metropolis drew the nobility to Paris; and liberty in the country, deprived of its only supporters, speedily fell to the ground (4).

In Germany. The progress was somewhat different in Germany, although there, as elsewhere in the European monarchies, the feudal system at first established the rudiments of a free government, the illegality of taxes without

(1) Conde, Hist. des Arab. i. 62; ii. 125. Sism. France, ii. 279, 355, 410; iii. 96, 97. Turner's Anglo-Saxons, ii. 66.

(2) Hume, i. 296. Sism. France, iii. 374, 451. Conde, ii. 126, 368, 491.

(3) Blanca's, Com. 669. Hal. Mid. Ages, ii. 38, 45, 67. Mariana, Teorie de los Cortes, 395.

(4) Mably, Obs. sur l'Hist. de France, s. v. c. 1; and Hallam, i. 256, 260, 391.



the consent of the people, and the partition of the legislative sovereignty with the states of the kingdom. The power of the great barons rendered the empire elective, and broke down into separate states the venerable fabric of the Germanic confederacy; but their sway within their own domains, being not restrained by the vigour or intelligence of the people, gradually became unlimited, and the frame of liberty was obliterated in the rising ambition of military power (1).

And Eng- Notwithstanding the long and hereditary attachment of the Eng-  
land. lish people to free institutions—notwithstanding the diffusion of this spirit by the establishment of trial by jury, and its preservation by the protection of insular situation, the usual causes of decline had begun to operate, and the feudal independence of the barons in the middle ages had yielded to the corrupted subservience of opulent times. The desolating wars of York and Lancaster thinned the ranks of the nobles; the increase of luxury, by changing the direction of their expenditure, sapped the foundations of their power. Under the Tudor princes, the indifference of Parliament to the liberties of the people had already commenced. Europe could not exhibit a monarch who governed his people with more absolute sway than Henry VIII, nor is any thing in modern times more instructive, than the pliant servility with which both the Parliament and the people obeyed his despotic commands. History can hardly exhibit an example of a reign in which a greater number of violent invasions were made, not only on public rights, but private property—in which justice was more disgracefully prostituted in courts of law, liberty more completely abandoned in the measures of Parliament, or caprice more tyrannically exerted on the throne. Those who ascribe the freedom of England solely to the feudal institutions, would do well to consider the condition of the country, and the servility of the people, during the reign of this ferocious tyrant—who confiscated the property of one-third of the landholders of his kingdom, and executed 72,000 persons in a single lifetime—or even perhaps of his more prudent and popular daughter (2).

It was only  
served for a  
barbarous  
age. Admirably adapted, therefore, as the feudal system was for preserving an independent spirit during the middle ages; gratefully as we must acknowledge its influence in restraining the power of the Northern conquerors, and preventing the very name of Right or Privilege from being swept away, as in the Asiatic monarchies, by the desolating hand of power; fully as we must admit that tyranny would have rioted without control, if, when the people were poor and disunited, the nobles had not been brave and free; still it is obvious that it was an institution suited only to a barbarous age, and alike incapable of being moulded, according to the changes which society undergoes, or of providing for the freedom of civilized times. With the institution of standing armies, the progress of luxury, the invention of gunpowder, and the rise of cities, it necessarily decayed. The liberty which was built on no other foundation has every where long since fallen to the ground (3).

The feudal system was in its vigour during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. When the barons dwelt in fortified castles on their estates, surrounded by a tenantry trained to warlike exercises, and attached alike by habit and interest to the fortunes of their chief; cased in armour from head to foot, and leading on a body of warlike and devoted retainers, they were

(1) Schmidt, vi. 8. Hallam, ii. 130.

(3) Hal. i. 321.

(2) Henry's Britain, xi. 260, 372. Hume, iii. 94, 389; iv. 275; v. 263-265, 470.

alike formidable to the throne and the cottage. If they extorted privileges in their own favour from the sovereign, they gave none to their enslaved vassals. With a merciless hand and unsparing severity, they checked the first struggles of the people for a share of that freedom which they so strenuously asserted for themselves. The insurrections of the *Jacquerie*, in France, of the peasants under Wat Tyler, in England, and of the Flemings under the brewer of Ghent, were repressed with a cruelty of which history affords few examples. The courage and enthusiasm of the multitude in vain contended for victory with steel-clad warriors, trained to arms from their earliest years. The knights broke through the ranks of the peasants with the same ease as they would have traversed an unarmed assembly; and the degraded serf, incapable of those efforts of heroism which animated the free shepherds of the Alps, sunk beneath the stroke of fate with the resignation of a martyr rather than the spirit of a warrior (1).

But the power of the nobles, incapable of being subverted by force, was undermined by opulence; and the emancipation of the people, for which so many thousands had perished in vain, arose at length from the desires and follies of their oppressors. The baron was formidable when his life was spent in arms, and he headed the feudal array which had grown up under the shadow of his castle walls; when his years were wasted in the frivolities of a court, and his fortune squandered in the luxuries of a metropolis, he became contemptible. His tenantry ceased either to venerate or follow a chief whom they seldom beheld; the seductions of cities became omnipotent to those who no longer valued their rural dependents; the desires of wealth, insatiable among persons who had the glittering prospect of a court before their eyes. The natural progress of opulence proved fatal to a power which made no provision for general felicity; and the wisdom of nature rendered the follies of the great the means of destroying the influence which they had rendered the instrument of oppression, instead of the bulwark of freedom.

While this was the fate of the liberty which the barbarian conquerors of the Roman empire brought with them from their native wilds, the progress of events was different in the south of Europe, where the ancient traces of Roman civilisation had never been wholly extirpated, and the wild shoots of Gothic freedom had never fully expanded. The liberty of modern Italy did not spring from the independence of the landed proprietors, but the free spirit of the inhabitants of towns; its cradle was not the hall of the feudal baron, but the forum of the industrious citizens. While the great landholders were engaged in projects of mutual slaughter, and issued only from their fastnesses in the Apennines to ravage the plains below, the inhabitants of the towns flourished under the protection of their native ramparts, and revived on their ancient hearths the decaying embers of urban liberty. At a time when the transalpine states were still immersed in barbarism, and industry was beginning only to spring in sheltered situations, under the shadow of the castle wall, the Italian republics were already far advanced in opulence, and the arts had struck deep root amidst the monuments of ancient splendour. The age of Edward III, when the nobles of England were still living in rustic plenty on their estates, when rushes were spread on the floors instead of carpets, and few of the barons could sign their name, was contemporary with that of Petrarch and Dante, with

(1) Hume, iii. 5, 7. Sismondi, x. 533, 540; xi. 434, 435.

the genius of Raphael, and the thought of Machiavel. When Charles VIII, at the head of the brave but barbarous nobility of France, burst into Italy at the close of the fifteenth century, he found himself in the midst of an opulent and highly civilized people, far advanced in the career of improvement, and abounding in merchants who numbered all the sovereigns of Europe among their debtors. When the feudal chieftain threatened to blow his trumpets within the walls of Florence, her citizens offered to sound the tocsin, and the monarch of the greatest military kingdom of Europe shrunk from a contest with the burghers of a pacific republic (1).

Rapid rise of the urban civilisation of Italy. Nor were the civil virtues of this period of Italian greatness less remarkable than its opulence and splendour. So early as the thirteenth century, the Emperor of Germany was defeated by a coalition of the republics of Lombardy, and the virtues of the Grecian states were rivalled by the patriotism of modern freedom. History has to record with pride, that, when the inhuman cruelty of the German soldiery placed the children of the citizens of Cremona before the walls of the city, to deter the besieged from discharging their weapons, their parents wept aloud, but did not cease to combat for their liberties; and that, when eleven thousand of the first citizens of Pisa were confined in the prisons of Genoa, they sent an unanimous request to the senate, not to purchase their freedom by the surrender of one fortress in the hands of the republic. We speak with exultation of the efforts made by the British empire during the late war; but how great soever, they must yield to the exertions of Italian patriotism, which manned the rival fleets of Genoa and Venice with as many sailors, at the battle of La Meloria, as served the navies of England and France at Trafalgar (2).

Their great and patriotic efforts. But the republics of Italy yielded to the influence of the same causes which had proved so pernicious to the Grecian commonwealths, and destroyed the feudal independence of the north of Europe. They made no provision for the liberties or interests of the great body of the people. The states of Florence, Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, were not in reality free: They were dynasties, in which a few individuals had usurped the rights, and disposed of the fortunes of the great bulk of their fellow-citizens. During the most flourishing period of their history, the citizens of all the Italian republics did not amount to 20,000; and these privileged classes held as many millions in subjection. The citizens of Venice were 2500,—those of Genoa, 4500,—those of Pisa, Sienna, Lucca, and Florence, 6000. The right of citizenship, thus limited, descended in a few families, and was as carefully guarded from invasion as the private estates of the nobility. To the conquered provinces no privileges were extended; to the republics in alliance no rights communicated. The privileged classes, in the dominant state, anxiously retained the whole rights of government in their own hands, and the jealous spirit of mercantile monopoly ruled the fortunes of the state as much as it cramped the energies of the subject territory. From freedom, thus confined, no general benefit could be expected; on a basis thus narrowed, no structure of permanent duration erected. Even during their greatest prosperity, they were disgraced by perpetual discord springing from so unjust and arbitrary an exclusion; and the massy architecture of Florence still attests the period when every noble family was prepared to stand a siege in its own palace, in defence of the rights which they sternly denied to their fellow-citizens (3). The rapid progress, and splendid history of these aristocratic republics, may

(1) *Sism. Rep. Ital.* iii. 157; v. 365; xii. 168.  
Hume, ii. 340.

(2) *Sism. Rep. Ital.* iii. 90. iv. 22, 29.

(3) *Sism. Rep. Ital.* xii. 16, 18, 24.

teach us the animating influence of freedom, even upon a limited class of society; their sudden decline, and speedy loss of public spirit, were the inevitable consequence of confining to a few the rights which should be shared by a larger circle.

Republics thus constituted were unable either to withstand the shocks of adverse, or resist the silent decay consequent upon prosperous fortune. The first great disaster stripped the state of all its allies, and reduced it to the forces that were to be found within its own walls. The Venetian oligarchy gave no rights to the conquered provinces in the Trevisan March, though the senate announced, that in sending them the standard of St.-Marc, it restored their liberties; and accordingly in one day it was stripped of all its possessions, and reduced to its original limits within the lagunæ of the capital. When Florence reduced the rival republic of Pisa, she received no addition of strength, because she gave no community of power; and the troops employed to keep the conquered state in subjection, were so much lost to the victorious power. The dissolution of the Athenian Confederacy after the defeat before Syracuse, of the Lacedæmonian power after the battle of Leuctra, of the Theban supremacy after the death of Epaminondas, have all their counterparts in the history of modern Italy, when, on any serious reverse to Venice, Florence, or Genoa, the cities of which they formed the head, broke off from a subjection which they hated, and joined the arms of any invader, to destroy that invidious authority in which they were not permitted to bear a part. Without the disasters of fortune, the silent operation of time brought the weakness of age upon communities who depended only on the energies of the higher classes. The families in whose hands the sovereign power was vested became extinct from age, or enfeebled by opulence, and no infusion of vigour from the inferior orders took place to restore their energy; the number of citizens continually declined, while the discontents of those subjected to their influence incessantly increased. The experienced evils arising from such a form of government led to a very general dislike to its continuance; and to avoid the ruinous contests of factions, as many of the Italian republics made a voluntary surrender of their liberties as lost them from the invasion of foreign power (1).

Decline of  
Flemish  
freedom.

The industry and wealth of Flanders early nourished a free spirit, and the utmost efforts were long made by the inhabitants of its cities for the maintenance of their liberties. But its freedom was confined to the burghers of the towns: the peasantry of the country joined their feudal leaders, in combating the rising influence of the manufacturing classes; and the jealousies of rival industry generally prevented them from joining in any common measure for the defence of their independence. Once only an unhopèd-for victory roused the whole country to arms, and a leader of greater military experience might have established their freedom on a durable basis; but the burghers of Ghent had not the firmness of the shepherds of Unterwalden, and the victory of Rosbecq crushed for centuries the rising independence of commercial industry, under the barbarous yoke of feudal power (2).

Experience, therefore, had demonstrated that the freedom which rose from the independence of the desert, equally with that which was nursed in the bosom of cities, was liable to decay, and that political wisdom was incapable of forming a community in which the seeds of that decline were not perceptible, which seemed the common lot of earthly things. It became, in con-

(1) Sism. xii. 16, 18, 21; Mach. iii. c. 27.

(2) Barante, i. 42, 43, Sism. France, xi. 249.

sequence, a generally received opinion, that communities, like individuals, had a certain period of life allotted to them, which it was impossible, by any means, to prolong beyond a certain period; and that a season of activity and vigour was necessarily followed by one of lassitude and corruption. "The image," says Mr. Ferguson, "of youth and old age was applied to nations; and communities, like single men, were supposed to have a period of life, and a length of thread, which was spun by the Fates, in one part uniform and strong, in another weakened and shattered by use, to be cut when the destined era is come, and to make way for a renewal of the emblem in the case of those who rose in succession (1)."—"Carthage," says Polybius, "being so much older than Rome, had felt her decay so much the sooner," and the survivor too, he foresaw, carried in her bosom the seeds of mortality.

Causes

which re-  
stored li-  
berty.

But while such was imagined, from former experience, to be the unavoidable fate of freedom wherever established, a variety of causes were silently operating, which communicated an unknown energy to the social system, and infused into modern states, even in periods of apparent decline, a share of the undecaying youth of the human race.

Influence of  
Christianity.

I. The first of these was the CHRISTIAN RELIGION. Slavery had been the ruin of all the states of antiquity. The influence of wealth corrupted the higher orders; and the lower, separated by a sullen line of demarcation from their superiors, furnished no accession of strength to revive their energies. But the influence of a religion, which proclaimed the universal equality of mankind in the sight of Heaven, and addressed its revelations in an especial manner to the poor, destroyed this ruinous distinction. In many states slavery gradually yielded to the rising influence of Christianity; the religious houses were the first who emancipated their vassals; their exhortations were unceasingly directed to extort the same concession from the feudal barons, and on their domains the first shoots of industrious freedom began to spring. While the vassals of the military proprietors were sunk in slavery, or lost in the sloth which follows so degraded a state, industry was reviving under the shadow of the monastic walls, and the free vassals of the religious establishments were flourishing in the comparative security of their superstitious protection. Nor was it only by the equality which it proclaimed, and the security from violence which it afforded, that the influence of religion favoured the growth of freedom. By the enthusiasm which it awakened, from the universal interests which it addressed, the mass of the people were roused into political activity; thousands, to whom the blessings of liberty were unknown, and whose torpor no temporal concerns could dispel, were roused by the voice of religious fervour. The freedom of Greece, the discipline of Macedonia, produced only a transient impression on human affairs; but the fanaticism of Mahomet convulsed the globe. The ardour of chivalry led the nobles into action; the ambition of monarchs brought the feudal retainers into the field; but the enthusiasm of the Crusades awakened the dormant strength of the Western world. With the growth of religious zeal, therefore, the basis of freedom was immensely extended; into its ranks were brought, not the transient ebullitions of popular excitement, but the stern valour of fanaticism; and that lasting support which neither the ardour of the city, nor the independence of the desert, could afford, was at length drawn from the fervour of the cottage (2).

Art of print-  
ing.

II. While the minds of men were thus warmed by the religious enthusiasm which was awakened, first by the Crusades, and sub-

(1) Civil Society, 340.

(2) Tytler's Scotland. Hume's England. Abbé Mann's Flanders.

sequently by the Reformation, the Art of Printing, destined to change the face of the moral world, perpetuated the impressions thus created, and widened the circle over which they extended. The spirit of religious freedom was no longer nourished only from the exhortations of the pulpit, or wrought upon in the fervour of secluded congregations; it breathed into the permanent exertions of human thought, and spread with the increasing wealth and enlarged desires of an opulent state of society. The discoveries of science, the charms of genius, may attract a few in every age; but it is by religious emotion that the great body of mankind are chiefly to be moved; and it was by the diffusion of its enthusiasm accordingly, that the greatest efforts of European liberty were sustained. But the diffusion of knowledge, by means of the press, is not destined to awake mere transient bursts of popular feeling: by imbuing the minds of those master-spirits who direct human thought, it produces lasting impressions on society, and is perpetually renewed in the successive generations, who inhale, during the ardour of youth, the maxims and the spirit of classical freedom. The whole face of society has been modified by this mighty discovery; the causes of ancient decay seemed counteracted by new principles of life, derived from the multitudes, whose talents are brought to bear on the fortunes of the state; and the influence of despotic power, shaken by the infusion of independent principles even into the armies which are destined to enforce its authority. But it is not unmixed good which has arisen from the diffusion of knowledge; if the principles of improvement have acquired a hardier growth, those of evil have been more generally disseminated; the contests of society have grown in magnitude and increased in violence, and the passions of nations been brought into collision, instead of the ambition of individuals. In the progress of time, however, the most injurious elements in human affairs are gradually extinguished, while the causes of improvement are lasting in their effects; the contests of the Greek republics, the cruelty of the Athenian democracy, have long ceased to trouble the world; but the maxims of Grecian virtue, the works of Grecian genius, will permanently continue to elevate mankind. The turbulence, the insecurity, the convulsions to which the extension of knowledge to the lower orders has hitherto given rise, will in time be forgotten, but the improved fabric of society which it has induced, the increased vigour which it has communicated, may ultimately compensate all its evils, and permanently bless and improve the species (1).

Discovery of  
gunpowder  
destroyed  
the power  
of the no-  
bility.

III. But it would have been in vain that the influence of religion withered the bands of slavery, and the extension of knowledge enlarged the capacity of freemen, had no change occurred in the arms, by which the different classes of society combat each other.

While the aristocracy of the country were permanently trained to combats, and the robber chivalry were incessantly occupied in devastation, the peaceable inhabitants of cities, the rude labourers of the fields, were unable to resist their attacks. With the exception of the shepherds of the Alps, whose hardy habits early gave their infantry the firmness and discipline of veteran soldiers, the tumultuary levies of the people were every where crushed by the steel-clad bands of the feudal nobility. The insurrections of the commons in France, of the peasants, in the time of Richard II, in England, of the citizens of Ghent and Liege in Flanders, and of the serfs in Germany, were all suppressed by the superior arms and steadier discipline of the rural chivalry. But with the discovery of GUNPOWDER, this decisive supremacy was destroyed: the

(1) Hume, vi. 100. *Mém. Rév. Franç.* i. 324

feudal array, invincible to the spears or halberds of the peasantry, yielded to the terrible powers of artillery; defensive armour was abandoned, from a sense of its insufficiency against these invisible assailants; and the weight of the aristocracy destroyed by the experienced inability of its forces to combat the discipline which laborious industry could bring into the field. The wealth of Flanders in vain contended with the lances of France on the field of Rosbecq; but the armies of Charles V were baffled by the artillery of the United Provinces. The barons of Richard easily dispersed the rabble who followed the standard of Wat Tyler, but the fire of the English yeomanry overthrew the squadrons of the Norman nobility at Marston Moor. Fire-arms are the greatest of all levellers; like the hand of death, they prostrate equally the ranks of the poor and the array of princes. Wealth soon became essential to the prosecution of war, from the costly implements which were brought into the field; industry indispensable to success, from the rapid consumption of the instruments of destruction which attended the continuance of the contest. By this momentous change new elements were brought into action, which completely altered the relative situation of the contending parties: industry ceased to be defenceless, because it could purchase the means of protection; violence lost its ascendancy, because it withered the sinews by which it was maintained (1).

Increase of luxury tended to the same effect. IV. The introduction of artificial wants, and the progress of luxury, completed the destruction of the feudal power. When the elegancies of life were comparatively unknown, and the barons lived in rural magnificence on their estates, the distribution of their wealth kept a multitude of retainers round their castles, who were always ready to support the authority from which they derived their subsistence; but by degrees the progress of opulence brought the nobility to the metropolis, the increase of luxury augmented their expenses, and from that moment their ascendancy was at an end. When the landed proprietor squandered his wealth in the indulgence of artificial desires, and seldom visited the halls of his ancestors but to practise extortion upon his tenantry, his means of maintaining war were dissipated, and his influence over his people destroyed. Interest ceased to be a bond of union, when no reciprocity of mutual services existed; affection gradually expired, from the absence of the objects on which it was to be exerted. The power of the feudal nobility was long the object of apprehension, from the remembrance of its terrors in former times, after its real influence was dissolved. The importance of this change, like that of all others introduced by nature, was not perceived till its effects were manifested. The aristocracy of France was still the object of antiquated dread, when it stood on the brink of destruction; and the people were doubtful of their ability to resist its power, when it sunk without a struggle before the violence of its enemies (2).

Combination of these causes in inducing the French Revolution. From the revival of letters, in the commencement of the sixteenth century, and the dawn of the Reformation, these causes had been silently operating, and Time, the greatest of all innovators, was gradually changing the face of the moral world. The stubborn valour of the reformed religion had emancipated an industrious people from the yoke of Spain, and the stern fanaticism of the English Puritans had overthrown the power of the Norman nobility. The extension of knowledge had shaken the foundations of arbitrary power, and public opinion, even in the least enlightened countries, moderated the force of despotic sway. The worst

(1) Planta's Switzerland, i. 297. Sism. France, x. 533, 543. Hume, iii. 10. Bar. i. 295. Hal. ii. 131.

(2) Wealth of Nations, i. 345.

governed states in Europe were constitutional monarchies compared to the dynasties of the East; and the oppression even of Russian severity was light in comparison of the cruelties of the Roman emperors. But it was not till the commencement of the French Revolution that the extent of the changes which had occurred was perceived, and the weakness of the arms of despotism felt when brought in collision with the efforts of freedom. Standing armies had been considered as the most fatal discovery of sovereigns, and the history of former ages appealed to as illustrating their tendency to establish despotic authority; but the changes of time were wresting from the hands of tyranny even this dreaded weapon, and, in the next convulsion, it destroyed the power which had created it. The sagacity of the French monarchs had trained up these formidable bands as a counterpoise to the power of the aristocracy, and they had rendered the crown independent of the control of the feudal barons; but a greater wisdom than that of Richelieu was preparing, in their power and discipline, the means of a total change of society. In vain the unfortunate Louis summoned his armies to the capital, and appealed to their chivalrous feelings against the violence of the people; the spirit of democracy had penetrated even the ranks of the veteran soldiers, and, with the revolt of the guards, the throne of the French monarchy was destroyed (1).

It is this circumstance which has created so important a distinction between the progress of popular power in recent, and its fate in ancient times. Tyranny has every where prevailed, by arming one portion of the people against the other; and its chief reliance has hitherto been placed on the troops, whose interests were identified with its support. But the progress of information has destroyed the security of despotism, by dividing the affections of the armies on which it depended; and the sovereigns of the military monarchies in Europe have now more to fear from the troops, whom they have formed to be the instruments of their will, than from the citizens, whom they regard as the objects of apprehension. The translation of the sword from the nobility to the throne, so long the subject of regret to the friends of freedom, has thus become an important step in the emancipation of mankind: War, amidst all its horrors, has contributed to the communication of knowledge and the dispelling of prejudice; and power has ceased to be unassailable, because it has been transferred from a body whose interests are permanent, to one whose attachments yield to the changes of society.

The former history of the world is chiefly occupied with the struggles of freedom against bondage; the efforts of laborious industry to emancipate itself from the yoke of aristocratic power. Our sympathies are all with the oppressed, our fears lest the pristine servitude of the species should be re-established; but with the rise of the French Revolution, a new set of perils have been developed, and the historian finds himself overwhelmed with the constant survey of the terrible evils of democratic oppression. The causes which have been mentioned, have at length given such an extraordinary and irresistible weight to the popular party, that the danger now sets in from another quarter, and the tyranny which is to be apprehended, is not that of the few over the many, but of the many over the few. The obvious risk now is, that the influence of knowledge, virtue, and worth, will be overwhelmed in the vehemence of popular ambition or the turbulence of democratic power. This evil is of a far more acute and terrible kind than the severity of regal, or the weight of aristocratic oppression: In a few years, when fully

(1) Robertson's Charles V., i. 120. Comines, i. 384. Lacretelle, *Hist. de France*, v. 32. Migu. 14.



developed, it destroys the whole frame of society, and extinguishes the very elements of freedom, by annihilating the classes whose intermixture is essential to its existence. It is beneath this fiery torrent that the civilized world is now passing; and all the efforts of philosophy are therefore required, to observe its course and mitigate its devastation. Happy if the historian can find, in the record of former suffering, aught to justify future hope, or in the errors of past inexperience the lessons of ultimate wisdom.

It is by slow degrees, and imperceptible additions, that all the great changes of nature are accomplished. Vegetation, commencing with lichens, swells to the riches and luxuriance of the forest; continents, the seat of empires and the abode of millions, are formed by the deposit of innumerable rills; animal life, springing from the torpid vitality of shell-fish, rises to the energy and power of man. It is by similar steps, and as slow a progress, that the great fabric of society is formed. Regulated liberty, the chief spring of human improvement, is of the most tardy developement; ages elapse before it acquires any firm consistency; nations disappear during the contest for its establishment. The continued observation of this important truth is fitted both to inspire hope and encourage moderation: hope, by showing how unceasing has been the progress of improvement through all the revolutions of the world; moderation, by demonstrating how vain and dangerous are all attempts to outstrip the march of nature, or confer upon one age the institutions or habits of another. The annals of the French Revolution, more than any other event in human affairs, are calculated to demonstrate these important truths; and by evincing in equally striking colours the irresistible growth of liberty, and the terrible evils of precipitate innovation, to impress moderation upon the rulers, and caution upon the agitators of mankind, and thus sever from the future progress of freedom those bloody triumphs by which its past history has been stained.

## CHAPTER I.

## COMPARATIVE PROGRESS OF FREEDOM IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

## ARGUMENT.

Parallel of the French and English Revolution—Superior Moderation and Humanity of the latter—It arises from the extent of the freedom previously acquired by the English—Effects of the Conquest of the Anglo-Saxons and Danes on the character of the people—Great Results of the Norman Conquest—It produced the class of Yeomanry, and the early Struggles for Liberty in the Island—Power of the Crown under the Norman Princes—Insular situation—Anglo-Saxon Institutions—Decline of the feudal liberty—Revived by the spirit of religious freedom and the Reformation—Cruelty of the Scotch and Irish Civil Wars, and of the English in the Wars of the Roses—Causes of the Moderation and Clemency of the Great Rebellion—Early situation of the French nation—The Champ-de-Mai—Deplorable situation of the native Gauls—Their courage first restored by the civil wars of the Nobles—Origin of the Boroughs—Great vassals of the Crown—Their sovereign privileges—Fatal effect of the want of a class of Yeomanry—Consequences of the English Wars—Insurrection of the Jacquerie—Extinction of the spirit of freedom by the military power of the Crown—The residence of the Nobility at Paris, and power of the great Feudatories—Effects of the Standing Army, and the military spirit and achievements of the country—Exclusive Privileges of the Nobility—Small Progress of the Reformation.—Extrication of the power of thought and the spirit of freedom by the influence of literature and philosophy—Causes of the savage character of the French Revolution—Beneficial effects of periods of suffering on national character, exemplified by the history of France and England.

No events in history are more commonly considered parallel than the Great Rebellion in England and the French Revolution. None, with certain striking points of resemblance, are in reality more dissimilar to each other.

In both, the crown was engaged in a contest with the people, which terminated fatally for the royal family. In both, the reigning monarch was brought to the scaffold, and the legislative authority overturned by military force. In both, the leader of the army mounted the throne, and a brief period of military despotism was succeeded by the restoration of the legitimate monarchs. So far the parallel holds good—in every other particular it fails.

In England the contest was carried on for many years, and with various success, between the crown and a large portion of the gentry on the one hand, and the cities and popular party on the other. In the single troop of dragoons commanded by Lord Barnard Stuart, were to be found a greater body of landed proprietors than in the whole members of the republican party, in both Houses of Parliament, who voted at the commencement of the war. In France the monarch yielded, almost without a struggle, to the encroachments of the people; and the only blood which was shed in civil war arose from the enthusiasm of the peasants in la Vendée, or the loyalty of the towns in the south of France, after the leaders of the royal party had withdrawn from the struggle. The great landholders and privileged classes, to the number of 70,000, abandoned the country; and the crown was ultimately overturned, and the monarch brought to the scaffold, by a faction in Paris, which a few thousand resolute men could at first have easily overcome, and who subsequently became irresistible only from their having been permitted to excite, through revolutionary measures, the cupidity of the lower orders over the whole country (1).

(1) Lac. Fr. Hist. i. 246. Id. Hist. de France, ix. 230. Hume, vi. 505.

In proportion to the magnitude of the resistance opposed in England to the encroachments of the people by the crown, the nobility, and the higher classes of the landed proprietors, was the moderation displayed by both sides in the use of victory, and the small quantity of blood which was shed upon the scaffold. With the exception of the monarch and a few of the leading characters in the aristocratic party, no individual during the great rebellion perished by the hands of the executioner; no proscriptions or massacres took place; the victors and the vanquished, after the termination of their strife, lived peaceably together under the republican government. In France no resistance whatever was offered by the government to the popular party. The sovereign was more pacifically inclined than any man in his dominions, and entertained a superstitious dread for the shedding of blood; the democrats triumphed, without the loss of a single life, over the throne, the church, and the landed proprietors; and yet their successes, from the very first, were stained by a degree of cruelty of which the previous history of the world affords no example (1).

RELIGION, in the English Revolution, was the great instrument for moving mankind: Even in the reign of James I the Puritans were the only sect who were zealously attached to freedom; and in every commotion which followed, the civil contests between the contending parties were considered as altogether subordinate to their religious differences, not only by the actors on the scene, but the historians who recorded their proceedings. The pulpit was the fulcrum on which the whole efforts of the popular leaders rested, and the once venerable fabric of the English monarchy, to which so large a portion of its influential classes have in every age of its history been attached, yielded at last to the force of fanatical frenzy. In France, the influence of religion was all exerted on the other side: the peasants of la Vendée followed their pastors to battle, and deemed themselves secure of salvation when combating for the cross; while the Jacobins of Paris founded their influence on the ridicule of every species of devotion, and erected the altar of Reason on the ruins of the Christian faith. Nor was this irreligious fanaticism confined to the citizens of the metropolis: it pervaded equally every department of France where the republican principles were embraced, and every class of men who were attached to its fortunes. Every where the churches, during the Reign of Terror, were closed; the professors of religion dispossessed, and their rights overturned: and the first steps towards the restoration of a regular government, were the restoration of the temples which the whirlwind of anarchy had destroyed, and the revival of the faith which its fury had extinguished (2).

The civil war in England was a contest between one portion of the community and the other; but a large part of the adherents of the Republican party were drawn from the higher classes of society, and the sons of the yeomanry filled the ranks of the iron and disciplined bands of Cromwell. No massacres or proscriptions took place; not a single manor house was burnt by the populace; none of the odious features of a servile war were to be seen. Notwithstanding the dangers run and the hardships suffered on both sides, the moderation of the victorious party was such as to call forth the commendation of the royal historian; and, with the exceptions of the death of the King, of Strafford, and Laud, few acts of unnecessary cruelty stained the triumph of the republican arms. In France, the

(1) Lac. vi. 132. Hume, vii. 76. Lingard, xi. 8. Toul. i. 145. Th. i. 36.

241. Carnot's Memoirs, 200. Rev. Mem. vol. xxxvii. Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 467.

(2) Larochejaquelein, 74. Scott's Napoleon, ii.

storming of the Bastille was the signal for a general dissolution of the bands of authority, and an universal invasion of private property; the peasantry on almost every estate, from the Channel to the Pyrénées, rose against their landlords, burnt their houses, and plundered their effects; and the higher ranks in every part of the country, excepting la Vendée and the royalist districts in its vicinity, were subjected to the most revolting cruelties. The French Revolution was not a contest between such of the rich and poor as maintained republican principles, and such of them as espoused the cause of the monarchy, but an universal insurrection of the lower orders against the higher. It was sufficient to put a man's life in danger, to expose his estate to confiscation, and his family to banishment, that he was, from any cause, elevated above the populace. The gifts of nature, destined to please or bless mankind, the splendour of genius, the powers of thought, the graces of beauty, were as fatal to their possessors as the adventitious advantages of fortune or the invidious distinctions of rank. "Liberty and Equality" was the universal cry of the revolutionary party. Their liberty consisted in the general spoliation of the opulent classes; their equality in the destruction of all who outshone them in talent, or exceeded them in acquirement (1).

The English Revolution terminated in the establishment of the rights for which the popular party had contended, but the great features of the constitution remained unchanged; the law was administered on the old precedents even during the usurpation of Cromwell, and the great body of the people scarcely felt the important alteration which had been made in the government of the country. In France, the triumph of the popular party was followed by an immediate change of institutions, private rights, and laws; the nobility in a single night surrendered the whole privileges which they had inherited from their ancestors; the descent of property was turned into a different channel by the abolition of the rights of primogeniture, and the administration of justice between man and man, founded on a new code destined to survive the perishable empire of its author. Every thing in England remained the same after the Revolution, with the exception of the privileges which were confirmed to the people and the pretensions which were abandoned by the crown. Every thing in France was altered, without the exception even of the dynasty that ultimately obtained the throne (2).

The great estates of England were little affected by the Revolution; the nobles, the landowners, and the yeomanry, alike retained their possessions, and, under a new form of government, the influence of property remained unchanged. With the exception of the lands belonging to the dignitaries of the church, which were put under a temporary sequestration, and of the estates of a few obnoxious cavaliers, who lost them by abandoning their country, no material alterations in property took place; and after the Restoration a compromise almost universally ensued, and the ancient landholders, by the payment of a moderate composition, regained their possessions. In France, on the other hand, the whole landed property of the church, and the greater part of that of the nobility, was confiscated during the Revolution; and such was the influence of the new proprietors, that the Bourbons were compelled, as the fundamental condition of their restoration, to guarantee the security of the revolutionary estates. The effects of this difference have been in the highest degree important. The whole proprietors who live on the fruits of the soil in Great Britain and Ireland, at this moment, notwithstanding the prodigious increase of wealth which has since taken place, probably do not

(1) Hume, i. 127, and vii. 76. Ling, xi. 8, Cla. (2) Ling, xi. 6, Rivarol, 139.  
 ranson, vi. 551, Rivarol, 95, 96.

amount to 300,000, while above 3,000,000 heads of families, and 15,000,000 of persons, dependent on their labour, subsist on the wages they receive. In France, on the other hand, there are nearly four millions of proprietors, most of them in a state of great indigence, and above 14,000,000, of souls constituting their families, independent of the wages of labour, being a greater number than the whole remainder of the community. In France, the proprietors are as numerous as the other members of the state; in England, they hardly amount to a tenth part of their number (1).

The political influence of England since the Restoration has mainly rested in the great families. A majority in the House of Commons was long appointed by a certain number of the House of Lords, and experience has proved that, excepting in periods of uncommon national excitement, the ruling power in the state is to be found in the hands of the principal landed proprietors. In France, the Upper House is comparatively insignificant; a great proportion of its members derive their subsistence from the bounty of the crown; and the whole, neither directly nor indirectly, possess any serious weight in the constitution. The struggle bequeathed by the Revolution to succeeding ages, has from this cause become different in the two countries; in Britain, as in ancient Rome, it is between the patricians and the plebeians; in France, as in the dynasties of the East, between the crown and the people. This is the natural consequence of the maintenance of the aristocracy in the one country, and its destruction in the other; political weight, in the end, always centres where the greater part of the national property is to be found.

The Military and naval power of England was not materially changed by the great rebellion. A greater degree of discipline, indeed, was established in its armies, and a more decided tone adopted by the government in its intercourse with foreign states; but the external relations of the monarchy remained the same; no permanent conquests were effected, and no alteration in the balance of European power resulted from its success. Within a few years after the Restoration, the English waged a doubtful maritime war with the smallest state in Europe, and the mistress of the seas was compelled to submit to humiliation from the fleets of an inconsiderable republic. In France, on the other hand, the first burst of popular fury was immediately followed by an ardent and universal passion for arms; the neighbouring states soon yielded to the vigour of the revolutionary forces, and Europe was shaken to its foundations by the conquests which they achieved. The ancient balance of power has been permanently destroyed by the consequences of their exertions; at first by the overwhelming influence which they gave to the arms of France, at last by the ascendancy acquired by the powers who subdued them.

Discrepancies so great, consequences so various, cannot be explained by any reference to the distinctions of national character, or of the circumstances under which liberty arose in the two countries. There is certainly a material difference between the character of the French and that of the English, but not such a difference as to render the one revolution bloodless save in the field, the other bloody in all but the sovereign; the one destructive to feudal power, the other confirmative of aristocratic ascendancy; the one subversive of order and religion, the other dependent on the attachments which they had created. There is a difference between the circumstances of the two countries at the period when their respective revolutions arose, but not such as to make the contest in the one the foundation of a new distribution of

(1) Baron de Staël, 54. Ling. xii. 20, 21, Miga. ii. 403. Colquhoun, 106, 107, Ganilh, 166, 208. Mémoires du Duc de Gaele, ii. 334.

property, and a different balance of power,—the other the chief means of maintaining the subsisting interests of society, and the existing equilibrium in the world.

The insurrection of slaves is the most dreadful of all commotions : the West India negroes exterminate by fire and sword the property and lives of their masters. Universally the strength of the reaction is proportioned to the oppression of the weight which is thrown off; the recoil is most to be feared when the bow has been furthest bent from its natural form. Fear is the real source of cruelty; men massacre others because they are apprehensive of death themselves. Property is set at nought where the aggressors have nothing to lose; it is respected when the gaining party have grown up under the influence of its attachments. Revolutions are comparatively bloodless when the influential classes guide the movements of the people, and sedulously abstain from exciting their passions; they are the most terrible of all contests, when property is arrayed on the one side and numbers on the other. The slaves of St. Domingo exceeded the horrors of the Parisian populace; the American revolution differed but little from the usages of civilized war. These principles are universally recognised; the difficulty consists in discovering what causes brought the one set to operate in the English, the other in the French Revolution.

These causes are to be found in the former history of the two countries; and a rapid survey of their different circumstances will best show the different character which was stamped upon the two contests by the previous acquisitions or losses of their forefathers.

Arises from  
freedom pre-  
viously gain-  
ed by the  
English. The vast extent of the Roman empire gave centuries of repose to the inhabitants of its central provinces. Wars were carried on on the frontier alone; and the legions, chiefly recruited by mercenary bands drawn from the semi-barbarous states on the verge of the imperial dominions, presented scarcely any resemblance to the legions which had given to the republic the empire of the world. The emperors, departing from the generous maxims of the republican government, oppressed the subject provinces by the most arbitrary exactions, and seldom allowed their inhabitants to hold any official situation, or participate in any important respect in the powers of government. The ignorance which universally prevailed was almost as great as that of England in the time of Alfred, when not a clergyman to the south of the Thames could read. From the long continuance of these circumstances during many successive generations, the spirit of the people throughout the whole Roman empire was totally extinguished, and they became alike incapable of combating for their lives with the enemies of their country, or of contending for their liberties with the despots on the throne. The pusillanimity with which its inhabitants, during a series of ages, submitted to the spoliation of barbarous enemies, and the exactions of unbridled tyrants, would appear incredible (1), were it not only supported by the concurring testimony of all historians, but found by experience to be the uniform attendant on a continued state of pacific enjoyment.

The British and the Gauls, at the period of the overthrow of the empire, were alike sunk in this state of political degradation. The inhabitants to the south of the wall of Severus were speedily overrun, upon the removal of the Roman legions, by the savages issuing from the recesses of Caledonia, and the British leaders bewailed in pathetic strains their inability to contend

(1) Gibbon, iii. 66, 67. Turner's Anglo-Saxons, i. 184, 188, and ii. 6, 8. Sismondi, France, i. 74, 77. Hume, &c.

with an artless and contemptible enemy. Notwithstanding the extraordinary military talents of Aetius, the Gauls were soon overrun by their barbarous neighbours; and a small tribe, emerging from the centre of Germany, became permanent masters of the plains of France. The Anglo-Saxons gradually vanquished the helpless Britons, and gave its lasting appellation to the future mistress of the waves (1).

These conquests in both countries were, as already noticed (2), attended in the end by a complete and violent change of landed property, and an immediate prostration of a considerable part of the vanquished people to the rank of slaves on the estates of their forefathers. This last and greatest humiliation, consequent upon a long train of political and military oppressions, completed the apathy and dejection of the great body of the people, and might have finally extinguished, as in the dynasties of the East, all desire of independence in their descendants, had not misfortunes arisen with their invigorating influence, and mankind regained in the school of adversity the spirit which they had lost in prosperous ages (3).

Effects of Anglo-Saxon and Danish conquests. The long and obstinate conflicts which the Anglo-Saxons had to maintain, first with the natives, and afterwards with each other,

were the first cause which, in the British isles, revived the energy of the people. These wars were not the transient result of ambition or the strife of kings, conducted by regular armies, but the fierce contests of one race with another, struggling for all that man holds dear—their lives, their religion, their language, and their possessions. For five long centuries the fields of England were incessantly drenched with blood; every county was in its turn the scene of mortal strife, and every tribe was successively driven by despair to manly exertion; until at length the effeminate character of the natives was completely changed, while their conquerors were prevented from sinking into the corruption, which in general rapidly follows success in barbarous times. The small divisions of the Saxon kingdoms, by producing incessant domestic warfare, and bringing home the necessity for courage to every cottager, eminently contributed in this way to the formation of the national character. Milton has said, that the wars of the Heptarchy were not more deserving of being recorded than the skirmishes of crows and kites. He would have been nearer the truth, if he had said that they laid the original foundation of the English character (4).

In this particular, as in many others, the insular situation of Britain eminently contributed to the formation of the national character. The other provinces of the Roman empire were overrun at once, because a vast and irresistible horde suddenly broke in upon them, which they had no means of resisting. The settlement of the Franks in Gaul, of the Visigoths in Spain, of the Vandals in Africa, and of the Goths, and afterwards the Lombards, in Italy, all took place in a single generation. But the sea-girt shores of England could not be assailed by such a sudden and irresistible irruption of enemies. "The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast" arrived by slow degrees, in squadrons and small fleets, none of which appear to have conveyed at once above six thousand or eight thousand men, most of them only one thousand or fifteen hundred. The people were thus encouraged to resist, by the considerable number of enemies which made their appearance on any one occasion; and although fresh invaders incessantly appeared, yet they generally assailed different districts, in the hope of discovering hitherto untouched fields

(1) Sism. Hist. de France, i. 201. Hume, i. 26, 29.

(2) See Introduction.

(3) Thierry, ii. 27. Turn. Anglo-Saxons, i. 37. Hume, i. 67.

(4) Hume, i. 42, 27. Sism. France, i. 400, 404.

of plunder. The spirit of the nation was thus called forth, both by the variety of points which were assailed, and the encouragement to local resistance which arose from the prospect, and frequently the achievement of success: and the northern inundation, instead of being a flood which at once overwhelmed the vanquished people, and for centuries extinguished their energy, produced rather a perpetual strife, in the course of which the warlike virtues were regained which had been lost amidst the tranquillity of the Roman empire (1).

The exposure of the English to the piratical incursions of the Danes perpetuated this martial spirit, after the union of the country into one monarchy might otherwise have threatened its extinction; and, by compelling the government for many generations to put arms into the hands of the great body of the people, whether Saxons or Britons, spread an independent feeling over the whole population. To resist these merciless invaders, the whole strength of the kingdom was trained to the use of arms, and the earls of the counties summoned to their support every man within their bounds capable of wielding a halberd. By an ordinance of Alfred, a regular militia was established throughout the realm; and it was enacted, that the whole people should be registered and armed. That great monarch fought no less than fifty-six battles in person with the invaders, and established at the same time the great rudiments of the English constitution, by the institution of courts of justice, trial by jury, and regular meetings of parliament (2).

The natural consequence of these circumstances, was the formation of a bold and independent character, not only among the landed proprietors, but the peasantry, upon whose support they daily depended for defence against a roving but indefatigable enemy. Accordingly, from the earliest times, the free tenants bore an important part among the Anglo-Saxons, and were considered as the companions, rather than the followers, of their chieftains. Like the *Comites* among the ancient Germans, they were the attendants of their leaders in peace, and their strength and protection in war. The infantry, in which the chiefs and their followers fought together, was, even before the Conquest, the chief strength of the English armies; while the cavalry, in whose ranks the nobles alone appeared, constituted the pride of the continental forces; and this difference was so material, that it appears to this day in the language of these different states. In all the states of the continent, the word *Chevalier* is derived from and means a *horseman*; while in England the corresponding word *knight*, has no reference to any distinction in the mode of fighting, but comes from the German *cnycht*, a young man or companion (3).

But, notwithstanding the strong principles of freedom which the Saxons brought with them from their original seats in Germany, the causes which have proved fatal to its existence in so many other states were here in full operation, and would have destroyed all liberty in England, but for the occurrence which is usually considered as the most calamitous in its history. The Saxons imported from the continent the usual distinction between freemen and slaves, and the number of the latter class augmented to a most fearful degree during the long wars of the Heptarchy, in which the prisoners were almost universally reduced to captivity. At the time of the Conquest, in consequence, the greater part of the land in the kingdom was cultivated by slaves, who constituted by far the most numerous class in the community; and the free tenants were extremely few in comparison. These slaves, in process of time, would have constituted the whole lower orders of the state;

(1) Mackintosh's England, i. 30.

(2) Hume, i. 95, 96, 102, 103, 107.

(3) Thierry, i. 182; ii. 180. Tac. Mor. Germ., c. 21, 14.



and the descendants of the freemen gradually dwindled into an aristocratical order. The greatest increase of mankind is always found in the lowest class of society; because it is in them that the principle of population is least restrained by prudential considerations; the higher orders, so far from multiplying, are never able, without additions from below, to maintain their own numbers. This is the fundamental principle which has rendered the maintenance of liberty for any long period so extremely difficult in all ages of the world. The descendants of the poor are continually increasing, while those of the middling or higher orders are uniformly diminishing. The humblest class, having least political weight, are overlooked in the first struggles for freedom: the free citizens, who have acquired privileges, resist the extension of them to their inferiors: the descendants of the people in one age become the privileged order in the next; and on the basis of pristine liberty, aristocratic oppression is ultimately established (1).

This change had already begun to operate in this island; the descendants of the first Anglo-Saxon settlers had already become a distinct class of nobles; the unhappy race of slaves had immensely multiplied; and, notwithstanding its original principles of freedom, the Anglo-Saxon constitution had become extremely aristocratical. No middle class was recognised in society; the peasants were all enrolled, for the sake of protection, under some chieftain whom they were bound to obey in preference even to the sovereign; and the industrious classes were so extremely scanty, that York, the second city in the kingdom, contained only 1400 families. The freedom of the Anglo-Saxons, therefore, was fast running into aristocracy: and their descendants, like the hidalgos of Spain, or the nobility of France, might have been left in the enjoyment of ruinous exclusive privileges, when the current of events was altered, and they were forcibly blended with their inferiors by one of those catastrophes which seem destined by Providence to arrest the course of human degradation.—This event was the NORMAN CONQUEST (2).

Great effects of the Norman conquest. As this was the last of the great settlements which have taken place in modern Europe, so it was by far the most violent and oppressive. The first settlers in the provinces of the Roman empire, being ignorant of the use of wealth, and totally unacquainted with the luxuries of life, deemed themselves fortunately established when they obtained a part of the vanquished lands. But the needy adventurers who followed the standard of William, had already acquired expensive habits, their desires were insatiable, and to gratify their demands, almost the whole landed property of England was in a few years confiscated. Hardly any conquest since the fall of Rome has been so violent, or attended with such spoliation, contumely, and insult. The ancient Saxon proprietor was frequently reduced to the rank of a serf on his paternal estate; and nourished, in the meanest employments, an inextinguishable hatred at his oppressor: maidens of the highest rank were compelled to take the veil, in order to preserve their persons from Norman violence; tortures of the most cruel kind invented to extort from the miserable people their hidden treasures. In the suppression of the great rebellion in the north of England, the most savage measures were put in force. A tract, eighty miles broad to the north of the Humber, was laid waste, and above a hundred thousand persons in consequence perished of famine; while in Hampshire, a district of country thirty miles in extent was depopulated, and the inhabitants expelled, without any compensation, to form a forest for the royal pleasure. Nor were these grievances merely the

(1) Hume, i. 213, 216. Brady, Pref. 7, 9.

(2) Hume, i. 210, 219. Brady, 40.

temporary effusion of hostile revenge; they formed, on the contrary, the settled maxims by which the government for centuries was regulated, and from which the successors of the Conqueror were driven by necessity alone. For several reigns, it was an invariable rule to admit no native of the island to any office of importance, ecclesiastical, civil, or military. In the reign of Henry I, all places of trust were still in the hands of the Normans; and so late as the beginning of the 12th century, the same arbitrary system of exclusion seems to have been rigidly enforced. The dispossessed proprietors sought in vain to regain their estates. An array of sixty thousand Norman horsemen was always ready to support the pretensions of the intruding barons. The throne is still filled by the descendants of the Conqueror, and the greatest families in the realm date their origin from the battle of Hastings (1).

The English antiquarians, alarmed at the consequences which might be deduced from this violent usurpation, have endeavoured to soften its features, and to represent the Norman as reigning rather by the consent than the subjugation of the Saxon inhabitants. In truth, however, it was the severity and continued weight of this conquest which was the real cause of the refractory spirit of the English people. The principles of liberty spread their roots the deeper, just because they were prevented from rising to the surface of society (2).

It produced the yeomanry of England. The Saxon proprietors having been almost expelled, were necessarily cast down into the lower stations of life. A foundation was thus laid for a middling rank in society, totally different from what obtained in any other state in Europe. It was not the native inhabitants, the pusillanimous subjects of the Roman empire, who from that period composed the lower orders of the state, but the descendants of the free Anglo-Saxon and Danish settlers, who had acquired independent habits from the enjoyment of centuries of freedom, and courageous feelings from the recollections of a long series of successes. One defeat could not extinguish the recollection of a hundred victories. Habits, the growth of ages, survived the oppression of transient sovereigns. The power of the Normans prevented them from rising into the higher stations in society; the slaves already filled the lowest walks of life. Between the two, they formed a sturdy and powerful body, which neither withered in the contests of feudal power, nor perished in the obscurity of ignoble bondage. It was from this cause that the *yeomanry of England* took their rise.

Had the kingdom of England been but an appendage to a monarchy of greater extent, the discontents of this middling class would probably have been treated with contempt, or repressed by the stern hand of military power; and the Norman barons, residing in their castles in France, might have safely disregarded the impotent clamour of their English tenantry. But, by a fortunate combination of circumstances, this was rendered impossible. The military chieftains who followed the Conqueror, were either possessed of no estates on the other side of the Channel, or their recent acquisitions greatly exceeded the value of their continental possessions. The kingdom of England was too powerful to be treated as an appendage of a Norman duchy, and the English tenantry too formidable to be resigned to the oppressive government of an absent nobility. Hence, both the sovereign and his nobles made England their principal residence; and the Norman nobility, who at first had flattered themselves that they had gained an appendage to their duchy, soon found,

(1) Hume, i. 260, 279, 283, 284, 318. Thierry, ii. 24, 27, 96, 97, 285, 303, 304, 368. Guizot, Hist. Eur. ch. ii.

(2) Blackstone, i. 27.

like the Scotch upon the accession of their monarchs to the English throne, that they had changed places with their supposed subjects, and that the province was become the ruling power.

The effects of this necessity soon appeared in the measures of government. At the accession of each successive monarch, in every crisis of national danger, it was deemed indispensable to make some sacrifice to the popular wishes, and abate a little of the wonted severity of the Norman rule, to secure the fidelity of their English subjects. When Henry I came to the throne, his first step was to grant the famous charter, which was long referred to as the foundation of English liberties, in order to secure the support of his insular subjects against the preferable claims of his brother Robert; and, in consequence, he was enabled to lead a victorious army into Normandy, and revenge, on the field of Tenchebray, the slaughter and the calamities of Hastings. When Stephen seized the sceptre, he instantly passed a charter confirming the grants of Henry, and promising to remit the Danish tax, and restore the laws of Edward the Confessor. Henry II deemed it prudent, in the most solemn manner, to ratify the same instrument. The pusillanimity and disasters of John led to the extortion of *Magna Charta*, by which the old charter of Henry I was again confirmed, and the rights of all classes of freemen enlarged and established; and the great charter itself was ratified no less than two-and-thirty different times in the succeeding reigns, on occasion of every extraordinary grant from the subjects, or an unusual weakness of the crown (1).

And the  
early strug-  
gles for  
freedom.

The effects of these circumstances on the character and objects of the English struggles for freedom have been in the highest degree important. From perpetually recurring to the past, the habit was acquired of regarding liberty, not as a boon to be gained, but as a right to be vindicated; not as an invasion of the constitution, but a restoration of its pristine purity. The love of freedom came thus to be inseparably blended with the veneration for antiquity; the privileges of the people were sought for, not in the violation of present, but in the restitution of ancient right; not in the work of destruction, but in that of preservation. The passion for liberty was thus divested of its most dangerous consequences, by being separated from the desire for innovation. The progress of the constitution was marked not by successive changes, but repeated confirmations of subsisting rights; and the effects of freedom in England, instead of being directed, as in most other countries, to procure an expansion of the rights of the people in proportion to the progress of society, have been almost entirely confined to an unceasing endeavour to prevent their contraction by the arbitrary disposition of succeeding monarchs.

The same circumstances produced a remarkable effect on the current of public feeling in England, and the objects which were regarded as the subject of national anxiety by the great body of the people. They mingled the recollection of their ancient laws with the days of their national independence, and looked back to the reign of Edward the Confessor, as the happy era when their rights and properties were secure, and they had not yet tasted of the severity of foreign dominion. Hence the struggles of freedom in England acquired a definite and practicable object, and, instead of being wasted in aspirations after visionary schemes, settled down into a strong and inextinguishable desire for the restoration of an order of things once actually established, and of which the experienced benefits were still engraved on the recollections of the people. For several centuries, accordingly, the continued

(1) Eadmer, 90. Hume, i. 328, 361; ii. 74, 81. W. Malmsbury, 170. M. Paris, 38, 272, Hallam, i. 452.

effort of the English people was to obtain the restitution of their Saxon privileges;—they were solemnly recognised in *Magna Charta*, and ratified in the different confirmations of that solemn instrument; and they are still, after the lapse of a thousand years, looked back to with interest by historians, as the original foundations of English liberty (1).

The effects of the same causes appeared in the most striking manner in the wars of the English for several centuries after the Norman conquest. Their neighbours, the French and the Scotch, brought into the field only the chivalry of the barons, and the spearmen of their serfs. No middling order was to be found superior to the common billman or foot-soldier, but inferior to the mounted knight. But, in addition to these the Plantagenet monarchs appeared at the head of a vast and skilful body of archers, a force peculiar to England, because it alone possessed the class from whom it could be formed. It was the Saxon outlaws, driven by despair into the numerous forests with which the country abounded, who first from necessity obtained a perfect mastery of this weapon. And accordingly, the graphic Novelist, with historic truth, makes Norman Richard the leader of English chivalry, and Robin Hood, the Prince of Saxon outlaws, the first of British marksmen. It was their descendants who swelled the ranks of the English yeomanry, and constituted a powerful body in war, formidable from their skill, their numbers, and their independent spirit. The bow continued for ages to be the favourite national weapon, of the Saxons. They practised the art incessantly in their amusements, and regained, by its importance in the field of battle, their due weight in the government of their country. Not the Norman nobility, not the feudal retainers, gained the victories of Crécy and Poitiers, for they were fully matched in the ranks of France, but the yeomen who drew the bow with strong and steady arms, accustomed to its use in their native fields, and rendered fearless by personal competence and civil freedom (2).

The Scotch government, whose armies had suffered so often from the English archers, in vain passed repeated acts to compel the formation of a similar force in their own country. All these measures proved ineffectual, because the yeomanry were wanting who filled the ranks of the bowmen in the English armies. The French kings endeavoured, by mercenary troops drawn from the mountains of Genoa, to provide a match for the English archers; but the jealousy of their government, which prevented the middling orders from being allowed the use of arms, rendered all such attempts nugatory; and the English, in consequence, twice vanquished their greatest armies, and marched boldly through the country at the head of their Saxon yeomanry. Even after the cessation of hostilities between the two monarchies, the terrible English bands ravaged with impunity the provinces of France; nor did they ever experience any considerable check till they approached the Swiss mountains, and encountered at the cemetery of Bâle, peasants as free, as sturdy, and as courageous as themselves (3).

It was a singular combination of circumstances which rendered the middling ranks under the Norman princes so powerful, both in the military array of the state, and in the maintenance of their civil rights. The Norman conquest had laid the foundation of such a class, by dispossessing the numerous body of Saxon proprietors; but it was the subsequent necessities of the sovereigns and the nobles, arising from their insular situation and their frequent contests with each other, which compelled them to foster the Saxon troops, and

(1) Hallam, i. 451, 452. M. Paris, 272.

(2) Hallam, i. 75. Froissart, i. 16. Tytler's Scotland, ii. 439, 440. Sism. France, xii. 51.

(3) Planta's Switzerland, ii. 321. Tytler's Scotland, ii. 439. Sism. France, xii. 51. Barante, i. 80. Preface.

avail themselves of that powerful force, which they found existing in such perfection among their native forests. Cut off by the ocean from their feudal brethren on the continent, surrounded by a numerous and warlike people, the barons perceived that, without the support of their yeomanry, they could neither maintain their struggles with the sovereign, nor ensure the possession of their estates. The privileges, therefore, of this class were anxiously attended to in all the renewals of the great charter; and their strength was carefully fostered as the main security both of the crown and the barons in their extensive and unsettled insular possessions. It is considered by William of Malmshury as an especial work of Providence, that so great a people as the English should have given up all for lost after the destruction of so small an army as that which fought at Hastings; but it was precisely the magnitude of this disproportion which perpetuated and extended the freedom of the country. Had the Normans not succeeded, the free Saxons would have dwindled into a feudal aristocracy, and the peasantry of England been similar in their condition to the serfs of France; had an overwhelming power vanquished, it would have utterly crushed the conquered people, the Norman conquest been similar in its effects to the subjugation of the neighbouring island, and the fields of England been now choked by the crowds and the wretchedness of Ireland. It was the conquest of the country by a force which, though formidable at first became soon disproportioned to the strength of the subdued realm, which both created a middling class and secured its privileges; and, by blending the interests of the victor with those of the vanquished, at length engrafted the vigour of Norman enterprise on the steady spirit of English freedom (1).

In this view, the loss of the continental provinces in the reign of King John, and the subsequent long wars between France and England under the Plantagenet princes, contributed strongly to the preservation of English liberty, by severing all connexion between the barons and their kinsmen on the continent, and throwing both the sovereigns and the nobility for their chief support upon the tenantry of their estates. From the commencement of these contests, accordingly, the distinction between Norman and English disappeared; the ancient prejudices and pride of the Normans yielded to the stronger feeling of antipathy at their common enemies; English became the ordinary language both of the higher and lower orders, and the English institutions the object of veneration to the descendants of the very conquerors who had overturned them. The continual want of money, which the long duration of this desperate struggle occasioned to the crown, strengthened the influence of English freedom; each successive grant by the barons was accompanied by a confirmation of ancient rights; the commons, from the constant use of arms, came to feel their own weight, and to assert their ancient privileges; and at length England, under the Plantagenet sovereigns, regained as much liberty as it had ever enjoyed under the rule of its Saxon monarchs (2).

Three circumstances, connected with the Norman conquest, contributed in a remarkable manner to the preservation of a free spirit among the barons and commons of England.

(1) William of Malmshury, 53. Hall, i. 449.

Long after these pages were written, I had the high satisfaction of finding that, unknown to myself, M. Guizot had about the same time adopted a similar view of the effects of the Norman Conquest, and illustrated it with the philosophical spirit and extensive research for which his historical works are so justly celebrated. See Guizot. *Essais sur l'Histoire de France*, p. 373-400. It is singular

how frequently about the same period, the same ideas are suggested to different writers, in situations remote from each other, which never before occurred to those who have treated of the subject. It would appear that political seasons bring forth the same fruits in different parts of the world at the same time.

(2) Hume, ii. 437, 488, 492; iii. 4, 78, 79.

Power of  
the Crown  
under the  
Norman  
kings.

1st. The first of these was the great weight which the crown acquired, from the ample share of the conquered lands which were allotted to the sovereign at the conquest. William received no less than 1422 manors for his proportion; a patrimony far greater than was enjoyed by any sovereign of Europe at the same period. The consequence was, that the turbulent spirit of the barons was far more effectually checked in this island than in the continental states; the monarch could generally crush by his sentence any obnoxious nobleman; his courts of justice extended their jurisdiction into every part of the kingdom; and the essential prerogatives of the crown, those of coining money and repressing private wars, were never, except in reigns of unusual weakness, usurped by the subjects. For a century and a half after the conquest, the authority of the Norman sovereigns was incomparably more extensive than that of any of the other monarchs who had settled on the ruins of the Roman empire. The industry and wealth of the commons was thus more completely protected in England than in the neighbouring kingdoms, where feudal violence, private wars, and incessant bloodshed, crushed the first efforts of laborious freedom; and the middling ranks, comparatively free from oppression, gradually grew in importance with the extension of their numbers, and the insensible increase of national opulence (1).

Insular si-  
tuation.

2d. The second was the insular situation of the country, and its consequent exemption from the horrors of actual warfare. With the exception of a few incursions of the Scottish monarchs into the northern counties, which were transient in their operations and partial in their effects, England has hardly ever been the seat of foreign war since the conquest; and the southern counties, by far the most important both in riches and population, have not seen the fires of an enemy's camp for eight hundred years. Securely cradled in the waves, her industry has scarcely ever felt the devastating influence of foreign conquest; her arms have often carried war into foreign states, but she has never suffered from its havoc in her own. Periods of foreign hostility have been known to her inhabitants only from the increased excitation of national feeling, or the quickened encouragement of domestic industry. The effects of this happy exemption from the peril of foreign invasion have been incalculable. It is during the dangers and the exigencies of war that military violence acquires its fatal ascendancy; that industry is blighted by the destruction of its produce; labour deadened by the forfeiture of its hopes; pacific virtues extinguished by the insults which they suffer; warlike qualities developed by the eminence to which they lead. In every age the principles of liberty expand during the protection of peace, and are withered by the whirl and the agitation of war. If this truth has been experienced in our own times, when military devastation is comparatively limited, and industry universally diffused, what must have been its importance in a barbarous age, when the infant shoots of freedom were only beginning to appear, and could expand only under the shelter of baronial power? It is accordingly observed by all our historians, that the feudal institutions of England were far less military than those which obtained in the continental monarchies; that private wars were comparatively unknown, and that the armies of the kings were for the most part composed of levied troops, whose unbroken experience soon acquired a decided superiority over the feudal militia of their enemies (2).

(1) Hume, i. 353, 360, 371; W. 78, 74. Hal. ii. 427. Lyttelton, ii. 288.

(2) Hallam, i. 479.

**Anglo-Saxon institutions.** 3d. The third circumstance was the fortunate limitation of the privileges of nobility to the eldest son of the family. That this was owing to the weight of the commons in the constitution, which prevented the formation of a privileged class, and suffered the prerogatives of nobility to exist only in that member of the family who inherited the paternal estate, cannot be doubted; but there is no single circumstance which has contributed more to confer its long permanence, its regular improvement, and its inherent vigour on the English constitution. The descendants of the nobles were thus prevented from forming a caste, to whom, as in the continental monarchies, the exclusive right of filling certain situations was limited. The younger branches of the aristocracy, after a few generations, relapsed into the rank, and became identified with the interests of the commons; and that pernicious separation of noble and plebeian, which has been the principal cause of the destruction of freedom in all the European states, was from the earliest times softened in this country. The nobility in the actual possession of their estates were too few in number to form an obnoxious body. Their relations, possessing no privileges above the commoners, ceased, after a few generations, either to be objects of envy to their inferiors or to be identified in interest with the class from which they sprung; and thus the different ranks of society were blended together, by a link descending from the higher, and ultimately resting on the lower orders (1).

But this freedom, though firmly established by the feudal constitutions, was limited to the classes for whose interest alone these constitutions appear to have been intended. The villains, or slaves, who still constituted the great body of the labouring population, were almost wholly unprotected. Even in *Magna Charta*, while the personal freedom of every free subject was provided for, the more numerous body of slaves were left to the mercy of their landlords, with the single stipulation that they should not be deprived of their implements of husbandry; and their emancipation, far from being the work of the barons, was accomplished by the efforts of the clergy and the progress of humanity in a subsequent age. General liberty, in our sense of the word, was unknown in England till after the Great Rebellion (2).

**Democratic spirit in the time of Richard II.** In the reign of Richard II, the gradual progress of wealth, and the extraordinary excitation awakened among all ranks by the military glories and lucrative wars of Edward III, produced the first effervescence of the real democratical spirit. The insurrection of Wat Tyler, which was contemporaneous with the efforts of the Flemish burghers to emancipate their country from feudal tyranny, was a general movement of the lower classes; and, accordingly, it was directed not against the power of the crown, but the exclusive privileges of the nobility.

“ When Adam dived and Eve span,  
Where was then the gentleman ? ”

was the maxim on which they rested; a distich pointing to a struggle of a totally different kind from any yet known in modern Europe, and corresponding very nearly to the principles which, four centuries after, produced the French Revolution. But all the great changes of nature are gradual in their progress; the effects of sudden convulsions are as transient as the effervescence from which they spring. The insurrection of the peasants in England met with the same fate as the struggle of the Flemish democracy at Rosbecq: the feudal array of the barons easily dispersed a rabble imperfectly armed and

(1) Hallam, i. 478.

(2) Hume, iii. 304, 305. Hall, i. 447. Hume, ii. 23. Tyler, ii. 260.

wholly undisciplined. Their victory was fortunate for the progress of real liberty;—the triumph of the peasants must have been short-lived, and would have anticipated the horrors of a negro revolt. Ignorant, disunited men, drawn from humble employments, can never long remain at the head of affairs. After the fervour of the moment is over, they necessarily fall under the dominion, if not of their former masters, at least of tyrants of their own creating, and their ultimate condition is worse than the first. Centuries of peace and increasing wealth—the unceasing operation of a beneficent religion—the influence of printing and diffused knowledge—a more general distribution of property—a change in the implements of human destruction, were all required before a part even of the levelling principles then diffused among the English peasantry could be safely carried into practice (1).

Wars of the  
Roses.

The power of the feudal aristocracy received a final blow from the wars of York and Lancaster. Those bloody dissensions destroyed the fabric of Gothic power—they watered the English plains with blood, but it was blood from which has arisen a harvest of glory. From causes which it is difficult now to trace, they early assumed a character of extraordinary ferocity. Prisoners of the highest rank, even on both sides, were, from the very commencement, massacred in cold blood; and at length the exasperation of the two parties became so excessive, that quarter was refused by common consent on the field of battle, and thirty-six thousand Britons fell by mutual slaughter in a single engagement. The chasm occasioned by these losses was soon repaired by the lower orders; but to the feudal nobility they proved completely fatal. Eighty princes of the blood, and almost the whole ancient barons, perished in these disastrous wars; and upon the termination of hostilities, the House of Peers could only muster forty members. The influence of those who remained was immensely weakened. In the different forfeitures which had been inflicted with so unsparing a hand by the factions who alternately prevailed, the estates of almost all the nobility in the kingdom had been included; and the feudal tenants, accustomed to a rapid change of masters in the general confusion, lost great part of their ancient veneration for their superiors. The nobles became divided among each other; the remnants of the Norman conquerors viewed with undisguised jealousy the upstart families who had risen in the midst of the public distress; and they regarded with equal horror the remnant of ferocious barons, ever ready to exterminate them to regain their properties. Weakened in numbers, disunited among each other, and severed from the affections of the people, the ancient nobility of England were never again formidable to the liberties of their country (2).

Decline of  
feudal  
liberty.

The ultimate effects of this destruction of the feudal aristocracy were eminently favourable to public freedom; but its immediate consequence was a great and most perilous augmentation of the power of the crown. The ancient barrier was swept away, and the new one was not yet erected. By the forfeitures which accrued to the victorious monarch, a fifth of the whole land of the kingdom was annexed to the crown; and notwithstanding the liberal grants to the nobles of his party, the hereditary revenue which Edward left to his successors was very great. The influence of the nobles being in abeyance, and the people having neither acquired nor become capable of exerting any share of power, but through the medium of their superiors, nothing remained to resist the power of the sovereign. The inevitable consequence was the destruction of the freedom which had been won by

(1) Barante, i. 74. Prof. Hume, iii. 40, 41.

(2) Hallam, iii. 294, 295. Hume, iii. 203, 212, 215, 237.



the struggles of the barons; and hence the tyranny of the Tudor princes. Nothing, accordingly, is more remarkable than the pliant servility of Parliament, and the slavish submission of the people, during the reigns of the successors of Henry VII. Civil war appears to have worn out their energies and extinguished their ancient passion for freedom; the Houses of Peers and Commons vied with each other in acts of adulation to the reigning monarch; it seemed as if the barons of Runnymede had been succeeded by the senate of Tiberius. Even the commons appear to have totally lost their former spirit;—the most arbitrary taxation, the most repeated violations of their liberties, produced no popular convulsion; mandates issued from court were universally obeyed in the election of members of Parliament; and the most violent changes of which history makes mention, the destruction of the national religion, the seizure of one-third of the national property, the execution of seventy-two thousand persons in a single reign, produced no commotions among the people (1).

Revised by spirit of religious freedom. This was the critical period of English liberty : the country had reached that crisis which in all the great continental monarchies has proved fatal to public freedom. Notwithstanding her insular situation; notwithstanding the independent spirit of her Saxon ancestry; notwithstanding the efforts of her feudal nobility, the liberty of England was all but extinct, when the enthusiasm of the REFORMATION fanned the dying spark, and kept alive, in a sect which soon became predominant, the declining flame of liberty. The Puritans were early distinguished by their zeal in the cause of freedom; during the imperious reign of Elizabeth they maintained in silence their inflexible spirit, and so well was her government aware of the dangerous tendency of their principles, that they never were permitted during the reign of that sagacious princess to have the smallest share in state affairs. In the reign of James I their number became greater, and their exertions in the cause of freedom more apparent; the first serious attacks on government were made through the pulpit; and the only persons in this, as in other countries at the same period, who made any exertions in favour of their liberties, were those who were animated with religious zeal. During the reign of Charles I an universal frenzy seized the nation; an enthusiasm almost as general, and far more lasting than that of the Crusades, pervaded the middling and a large proportion of the higher ranks; and, but for the strength of that feeling, the Long-Parliament would never have been able to withstand the exertions, which with their characteristic loyalty, the English gentlemen at that period made in defence of their sovereign. From whatever cause, says Cromwell, the civil war began, if religion was not the original source of discord, yet God soon brought it to that issue; and he constantly affirmed, that, amidst the strife of battle, and the dangers of war, the reward to which he and his followers looked was freedom of conscience. It is of little moment whether the future protector and his military chieftains were or were not sincere in these professions; it is sufficient that such was the temper of the times—that by no other means could they rouse the energies of the great body of the people. The effects of this spirit were not confined to this island or the period in which it arose; they extended to another hemisphere and a distant age (2); and from the emigrants whom religious oppression drove to the forests of America, have sprung those powerful states, who have tried, amidst transatlantic plenty, the doubtful experiment of democratic freedom.

(1) Hume, iv, 244, 275, 348, 309; Hallam, iii, 298. (2) Hume, v, 455, 183; vi, 48, 100, 117, 387, 348; Ling, xi, 304.

But while the current of popular feeling was thus violent in favour of republican principles, the effect of ancient and fondly cherished national institutions strongly appeared, and the English reaped the benefit of the long struggle maintained through the feudal ages by their ancestors in the cause of freedom. Though the substance of liberty had fled during the arbitrary reigns of the Tudor princes, her shadow still remained; the popular attachment to ancient rights was still undecayed; the venerable forms of the constitution were yet unchanged, and on that foundation the new and broader liberties of the country were reared. But for this happy circumstance, the spirit of freedom which the Reformation awakened might have wasted itself, as in Scotland, in visionary and impracticable schemes, until the nation, worn out with speculations from which no real benefit could accrue, willingly returned to its pristine servitude. Whereas, by the course of events which had preceded it, the stream of liberty naturally returned, when strengthened, into its wonted though now almost neglected channels, and, without breaking its former bounds, or overwhelming the ancient landmarks, extended its fertilizing influence over a wider surface.

Regard to  
ancient  
rights in  
England.

"It is remarkable," says Turgot, "that while England is the country in the world where public freedom has longest subsisted, and political institutions are most the subject of discussion, it is at the same time the one in which innovations are with most difficulty introduced, and where the most obstinate resistance is made to undoubted improvements. You might alter the whole political frame of government in France with more facility than you could introduce the most insignificant change into the customs or fashions of England (1)." The principle here alluded to is at once the consequence and the reward of free institutions. Universally it will be found, that the attachment of men to the customs and usages of their forefathers is greatest, where they have had the largest share in the establishment or enjoyment of them; and that the danger of innovation is most to be feared where the exercise of rights has been unknown to the people. The dynasties of the East are of ephemeral duration, but the customs of the Swiss democracies seem as immovable as the mountains in which they were cradled (2). The same principles have, in every age, formed the distinguishing characteristic of the English people. During the severities and oppression of the Norman rule, it was to the equal laws of the Saxon reigns that they looked back with a fond affection, which neither the uncertainty of oral tradition, nor the intensity of present suffering, had been able to destroy. When the barons assembled in open rebellion at Runnymede, it was not any imaginary system of government which they established, but the old and consuetudinary laws of Edward the Confessor, which they moulded into a new form, and established on a firmer basis in the great Charter; tempering even in a moment of revolutionary triumph the ardour of liberty and the pride of descent by their hereditary attachment to old institutions. The memorable reply of the barons to the proposal of the prelates at Merton, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutare*, has passed into a consuetudinary rule, to which the preservation of the constitution through all the convulsions of later times

(1) Turgot, ii 32.

(2) The French Directory, in the ardour of their innovations, proposed to the peasants of Uri and Unterwalden a change in their constitution, and made the offer of fraternization, which had seduced the allegiance of so many other states. But these sturdy mountaineers replied, "Words cannot express, citizen directors, the profound grief which the proposal to accede to the new Helvetic league

has occasioned in these valleys. Other people may have different inclinations; but we, the descendants of William Tell, who have preserved without the slightest alteration the constitution which he has left us, have but one unanimous wish, that of living under the government which Providence and the courage of our ancestors have left us."—LACAPPELLE, *Rév. Franç.* iii. 162.

is mainly to be ascribed. In the petition of right drawn by Selden, and the greatest lawyers of his day, the Parliament said to the king, "Your subjects have *inherited* this freedom;" and in the preamble of the Declaration of Rights, the states do not pretend any right to frame a government for themselves, but strive only to secure the religion, laws, and liberties, long possessed, and lately endangered; and their prayer is only, "That it may be declared and enacted, that all and singular, the rights and liberties asserted and declared, are the true ancient and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom (1)." "By adhering in this manner," says Burke, "to our forefathers, we are guided, not by the superstition of antiquarians, but the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of policy the image of a relation in blood, binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties, adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars (2)."

Extend to  
America.

These principles have not been abandoned by the descendants of England in their transatlantic possessions. When the Americans threw off the yoke of Britain, they retained its laws, its religion, its institutions; no massacres or proscriptions, no confiscations or exiles, disgraced the rise of their liberty; no oblivion of the past was made the foundation of their hopes for the future. The English Church is still the prevailing religion of the land; the English decisions still regulate their courts of justice; and English institutions form the basis on which their national prosperity has been reared. Amidst the exasperation of a civil war, they have never deviated from the usages of civilized life. Alone of all foreigners, an Englishman still feels at home when he crosses the Atlantic; and the first efforts of American eloquence have been exerted in painting the feelings of an ingenuous inhabitant of that country, when he first visited the land of his fathers (3).

Savage civil  
wars in Ire-  
land.

As the best proof that the Revolution of England owed its distinctive character to the circumstances which preceded it, and to the large share enjoyed by previous generations in the government of the country, it is sufficient to refer to what took place at the same period in the sister kingdoms. Ireland, conquered by Henry II, was retained for four centuries in a state of feudal subjection to Britain; none of the privileges of English subjects had been communicated to her inhabitants; they had neither tasted of the severity of Saxon conquest, nor the blessings of Saxon freedom. Feudal aristocracy, in its worst form, accompanied by national exasperation, and an absent nobility, there prevailed; and what was the consequence? Instead of the moderate reforms, the humane conquests, and the security to property, which distinguished the English Rebellion, there appeared the most terrible horrors of popular licentiousness, and the last severities of military execution,—general massacres, the burning of families, torrents of blood, both in the field and on the scaffold, the storming of cities, and the desolation of provinces. Cromwell seriously endeavoured to extirpate the native Irish Catholics, though they were eight times as numerous as the Protestants; forty thousand men were sent as soldiers to foreign states, and their wives and children hurried off to the plantations; the most severe and arbitrary laws enforced against those who remained in the country; the estates of all who had borne arms against the Parliament were forfeited, and one-third cut off

(1) Wm. and Mary, c. 1.

(2) Planta's Switzerland, ii. 137. Hume, ii. 89, 141, 223. Burke, vi. 76, 80.

(3) Sketch Book, i. 19.

of all those proprietors who had not served in the popular ranks; a large portion of the people were moved from one part of the country to another, and any transplanted Irishman, found out of his district, might be put to death by the first person who met him. Such was the effect of these measures, that nearly one-half of the whole land in the country, amounting to above seven millions of acres, was forfeited, and bestowed on the Revolutionary soldiers; and even after the Restoration of Charles, two-thirds of these immense possessions were left in the hands of the recent acquirers, and though the remainder was nominally restored to the Catholics, none of it returned to the dispossessed proprietors (1).

And Scotland.  
land.

In Scotland, also, at the same period, the struggle for freedom was marked by all the horrors of popular licentiousness. In that remote state, neither the Saxon institutions, nor the principles of freedom, had obtained any solid footing; and, in consequence, the nobles and peasantry, without either the intervention of a middling rank or the moderating influence of previous privileges, were brought into fierce collision at the Reformation. As might have been expected, the proceedings of the Revolutionists were from the very first characterised by the utmost violence and injustice; the whole property of the Church, amounting to about a third of the kingdom, was confiscated and bestowed on the barons of the popular party; blood flowed in torrents on the scaffold; quarter was almost invariably refused in the field; and the proceedings of the adverse parties resembled rather the sanguinary vengeance of savages, than the conduct of men contending for important civil privileges. The mild and humane conduct of the Civil War in England forms the most striking contrast to the cruelty of the Royalists, or the severity of the Covenanters in Scotland. The horrors of the *la Vendée* insurrection were anticipated in the massacres of Montrose's followers; and the *Noyades* of the Loire are not without a parallel in the atrocious revenge of the popular faction (2).

Nor was it any peculiarity in the national character which stamped its singular and honourable features on the English Rebellion. The civil wars of York and Lancaster, not a century and a half before, had been distinguished by a degree of ferocious cruelty, to which a parallel is hardly to be found even in the terrific annals of the French Revolution; prisoners of every rank were uniformly massacred in cold blood after the action was over; a leader of one of the factions did not scruple to murder, with his own hands, the youthful prince whom fortune had placed in his power; and the savage orders to give no quarter, which the French revolutionary government issued to their armies, but the humanity of its commanders refused to execute, were deliberately acted upon, for a course of years, by bodies of Englishmen upon each other (3).

Causes of  
the huma-  
nity of the  
Great  
Rebellion.

The humane and temperate spirit of the English Rebellion, must therefore be ascribed to the circumstances in which the contest began in that country,—the rights previously acquired, the privileges long exercised, the attachments descending from a remote age, the moderation flowing from the possession of freedom. It was disgraced by no violent innovations, because it arose among a people attached by long habit to old institutions. It was followed by no proscriptions, because it was headed by the greater part of the intelligence of the state, and not abandoned to the pas-

(1) Lingard, xi. 186; xii. 74. Hume, i. 379.  
Laing's Scotland, iii. 218, 219.

(2) Chambers' Revolutions, 1642, ii. p. 137.  
Laing, iii. 326, 330, 355, 448.

(3) Lac. Pr. Hist, ii. 58. Hume, iii. 203, 210.  
Laing, iii. 355.

sions of the populace. It was distinguished by singular moderation in the use of power, because it was conducted by men to whom its exercise had long been habitual; it was attended by little confiscation of property, because among its ranks were to be found a large portion of the wealth of the kingdom. The remarkable moderation of public opinion, which has ever since distinguished this country from the neighbouring states, and attracted equal attention among foreigners (1) as ourselves (2), has arisen from the continued operation of the same circumstances.

The importance of these circumstances will best be appreciated, and their application to the French Revolution understood, by reviewing the past history of that country.

Early state of the Gauls. Like the other provinces of the Roman empire, Gaul, upon the irruption of the barbarous nations, was sunk in the lowest stage of effeminacy and degradation. So early as the time of Tacitus, the decay in the military courage of the people had become conspicuous; and before the fall of the empire, it was found to be impossible to recruit the legions among its enervated inhabitants. Slavery, like a cancer, had consumed the vitals of the state; patrician wealth had absorbed plebeian industry; the race of independent freemen had disappeared, and in their room had sprung up a swarm of ignoble dependents upon absent proprietors. These miserable inhabitants were oppressed to the greatest degree by the Roman governors; they were rigidly excluded from every office of trust, civil or military. The whole freemen in the province only amounted to five hundred thousand men; and the capitation-tax, in the time of Constantine, is said to have amounted to the enormous sum of nine pounds sterling for each free citizen. Under this iron despotism, population in the provinces rapidly declined; the slaves went off with every invader, and swelled the ranks of the northern conquerors; and while the numbers of the people steadily increased among the free inhabitants of the German forests, the human race was fast disappearing in the opulent provinces of the Roman empire (3).

National character, as might easily have been anticipated, rapidly declined under the combined influence of these degrading circumstances. The inhabitants of Gaul were considered by the northern nations, in the sixth century, as uniting all the vices of human nature—the cruelty of barbarism with the cowardice of opulence—the cringing of slaves with the arrogance of tyrants—the falsehood of civilized with the brutality of savage life. They could apply no stronger epithet of contumely on an enemy, than to call him a Roman (4).

Conquest by the Franks. When the barbarians, at the close of the fourth century, broke in on all sides upon the Western empire, they found the whole land in the hands of a few great families, who cultivated their ample possessions by means of slaves. The province of Gaul was no exception to this deplorable state, the natural and miserable termination of corrupted opulence. Their barbarian conquerors, however, did not at once seize the whole of the vanquished lands: The Burgundians and Visigoths took two-thirds of their respective conquests; and although the proportion seized by the Franks is not distinctly mentioned, it is evident that they occupied the largest portion of the lands of Gaul. The lands left in the hands of the Roman proprietors were termed *allodial*, which, for a considerable time, were distinguishable

(1) *Lec. Hist. de France*, viii. 39.

(2) *Robertson's Scotland*, iii. 182. *Burke*, vi. 80.

(3) *Tac. Vit. Agric.* c. ii. *Gib.* i. 92, 93; iii. 65,

66. *Turner*, i. 188, *Anglo-Saxons*. *Sism.* i. 69, 74, 77, 84, 89, 106.

(4) *Luitprand*, ii. 481. *Gibbon*, ix. 443.

from the military estates by which they were surrounded; but the depressed condition of the ancient inhabitants is abundantly proved by the fact, that the fine for the death of a common Frank was fixed at 200 solidi, and that of a Roman proprietor at 100. By degrees the distinction between barbarian and Roman became still more marked; the allodial properties were gradually either seized by the military chieftains in their neighbourhood, or ranked, for the sake of security, under their protection; the feeble descendants of the corrupted empire yielded to the energetic efforts of barbarian independence, and by the eleventh century the revolution in the landed property was complete, except in the southern provinces, and the name of Gaul merged in that of France (1).

Independent spirit of the Franks. The military followers of Clovis, like all the other German tribes, were strongly attached to the principles of freedom. They respected his military talents, and willingly followed his victorious standard; but they considered themselves as his equals rather than his subjects, and were not afraid to dare his resentment, when the period of military command was over. When the spoil was divided at Soissons, Clovis begged that a particular vase might be set aside for his use. The army having expressed their acquiescence, a single soldier exclaimed, "You shall have nothing here but what falls to your share by lot," and struck the precious vessel with his battle-axe. The conquest of Gaul spread these independent warriors, who did not exceed many thousands in number, over the ample provinces of that extensive country, and their annual assemblies in spring gave rise to the celebrated *Champ-de-Mai*, long revered as the rudiments of French liberty. But the difficulty of assembling a body so widely dispersed was soon severely felt; the new proprietors early became occupied by the interest of their separate estates, and disliked the burdensome attendance in the convocations; the monarchs ceased to summon their unwilling followers; and the successors of Clovis gradually freed themselves from all dependence on the ancient founders of their monarchy (2).

Rois Fainéans. The power of the monarch, however, in barbarous ages, can be rendered paramount only by the possession of great military qualities: the ease and luxury of a court rapidly extinguish the vigour which is requisite for its maintenance. The mayors of the palace soon usurped the royal authority; and a succession of monarchs, distinguished by the emphatic name of *Rois Fainéans*, rendered the sovereign contemptible even in the eyes of a degenerate people. The victories of Charles Martel, the genius of Charlemagne, for a time averted the degradation of the throne; but with their exertions the royal authority declined (3); the great proprietors every where usurped the prerogatives of the crown, and France was divided into a number of separate principalities, each in a great measure independent of its neighbour, and waging war and administering justice of its own authority.

Corruption of the empire of Charlemagne. Nothing is more remarkable than the rapid and early degeneracy of barbarous states. No sooner are they settled on the vanquished lands, than they adopt the vices and sink into the effeminacy of their subjects; the energy of the barbarian character is lost with the necessity which created it; and the descendants of the conquerors cannot, in a few generations, be distinguished from those of the vanquished people. This truth was signally exemplified in the early history of the French monarchy. Even during the reign of Charlemagne, the inherent weakness of a barbarous

(1) Hallam, i. 144, 147, 149. 168. *Leges Salicæ*, c. 58. *Sism. France*, i. 82, 83. *Gib. v.* 263. *Guizot*, *Hist. de France*, 72, 100.

(2) Du Bos, *Hist. Critiq.* ii. 361. Hallam, i. 153, 155.

(3) Hallam, i. 31, 156.

age was perceptible: all the splendour of his talents, all the experience of his armies, could only throw a temporary lustre over his empire; the efforts of a few thousand freemen were lost amidst the degradation of many millions of slaves; and the conqueror of the Western World had the mortification, before his death, of perceiving the rapid progress of the decay which was so soon destined to prostrate his empire. It is public freedom and general intelligence alone which can enable the human race to withstand the influence of too rapid prosperity; which can long continue in ages of civilisation the energy and courage of barbarous times; and, by providing for the incessant elevation of those classes who have been bred under the discipline of adversity, furnish a more durable antidote to the growing depravity of prosperous times (1).

In dissolution. The weakness of the empire at once appeared upon the death of the victorious monarch. Instantly, as if by enchantment, the fabric fell to pieces; separated into detached dominions, all means of mutual support were lost, and pusillanimous millions yielded almost without a struggle to the ravages of contemptible enemies. The Normans, the Huns, the Saracens, pressed the different frontiers; a swarm of savage barbarians overspread the plains of Germany, and threatened the total extirpation of the inhabitants; the Northmen ascended every navigable stream, and from their shallow boats spread flames and devastation through the interior of France. Rich and poor were alike incapable of exerting themselves to avert the common calamity; villages were burnt, captives carried off, castles destroyed in every province, without the slightest effort at resistance; and while the unconquered tribes of Germany boldly united, under Otho, to drive back the terrible scourge of the Hungarian horse, the degenerate inhabitants of the Roman provinces were unable to repel the detached inroads of the Norman pirates (2).

Private wars of the nobles. The first circumstance which restored the military courage of the inhabitants of France, after the decline of the dynasty of Charlemagne, was the private wars of the nobles, and the universal fortification of the castles, arising from the weakness of the throne. It is thus that the greatest human evils correct themselves, and that the excess of misery ultimately occasions its alleviation. Deprived of any thing like support from the government, and driven to their own resources for protection, the landed proprietors were compelled to arm their followers, and strengthen their castles, now become their only refuge. Military skill was restored with the use of arms; courage revived from confidence in its defences; a race of men arose inured to war from their infancy, and strong in the consciousness of superior prowess. In the interior of the castles, arms were the only employment, and the recounting of military exploits the sole amusement of the age; the words *chivalry* and *courtesy*, still attest the virtues which were learned by the mounted knights, and which were considered peculiar to those who had been bred up in the *courts* of the barons. The wretchedness and suffering of those ages have produced the most dignified features of modern manners. From the degraded followers of the Carlovingian kings, have sprung the heroic nobility of France; from centuries of war and rapine, the generous courage of modern warfare; from the dissolution of regal authority, the pride and independence of feudal nobility (3).

But it was only the nobles or landed proprietors who were renovated by

(1) *Sism. France*, i. 400, 401; ii. 279. *Condé*, ii. 125.

(2) *Hallam*, i. 25. *Sism.* iii. 96, 97, 123, 168, 170, 255, 270.

(3) *Sism.* iii. 375, 461.

these intestine divisions; the serfs who cultivated the ground, the burgesses who frequented the towns, were retained in the most degraded and abject state; the Franks lived in their castles, surrounded by their armed followers, in solitary independence; the Gauls, unarmed and unprotected, toiled in the fields, alike exposed to rapine and incapable of resistance. The jealousy of their superiors denied them the use of arms; the fatal superiority of the knights, in actual warfare, rendered revolt hopeless: frequently, during the eleventh century, the miseries of the peasantry drove them to extremities, and led to bloody contests with the nobles; but in no one instance were they successful, and they returned to their ploughs, depressed by suffering, or disheartened by defeat (1).

Rise of the  
Boroughs.

The first ray which broke in upon the gloom of the middle ages, on the continent of Europe, came from the boroughs,—“an excrable institution,” say the old historians, “by which slaves are encouraged to become free, and forget the allegiance they owe to their masters.” The first corporation in France arose about half a century after the English conquest, and they were brought into general use by Louis the Fat, to serve as a counterpoise to the power of the nobles. Rouen and Falaise, the first incorporated boroughs of Normandy, enjoyed their privileges by a grant from Philip Augustus, about the year 1267. Prior to that time the states of the duchy were composed entirely of nobles and clergy. The kings, however, early sensible of the importance of these communities as a bulwark against the encroachments of the nobles, procured a law, by which, if a slave escaped from his master, and bought a house in a borough, and lived there a year without being reclaimed, he gained his freedom,—a custom which seems to have prevailed equally in France, Scotland, and England. From this cause, joined to the natural influence of mutual protection and extended intercourse, boroughs every where became the cradles of freedom; although the nobles still looked upon them with such contempt, that, by the feudal law, the superior was debarred from marrying his female ward to a *burgess* or *villain*. But, notwithstanding their growing importance, the boroughs were incapable of offering any effectual resistance, for many ages, to the power of the nobles, from their want of skill in the use of arms, to which their superiors were habituated,—a distinction of incalculable importance in an age when violence was universal, and nothing but the military profession held in any esteem (2).

Great feudo-  
datories.

The two circumstances which had mainly fostered the spirit of freedom in England, were the extraordinary power of the sovereign, and the independent spirit of the commoners, both the immediate consequence of the Norman conquest. In France, the reverse of both these peculiarities took place; the dignity of the throne was lost in the ascendancy of the nobles, and the spirit of the people extinguished by the grasp of feudal power. For a series of ages the monarchy of France was held together by the feeblest tenure: The Dukes of Normandy, the Counts of Toulouse, the Dukes of Burgundy, and the Dukes of Bretagne, resembled rather independent sovereigns than feudal vassals, and the real dominion of the throne, before the time of Louis XI, seldom extended beyond the vicinity of the capital. In moments of danger, when the great vassals assembled their retainers, the King of France could still muster a mighty host, but with the transitory alarm the forces of the monarchy melted away; the military vassals retired after the period of their service was expired, and the leader of a hundred thou-

(1) Thierry, i. 161, 169, 170.

(2) Hume, ii. 111, 112. Hollingshed, iii. 15. Du-

ange, voce Commune. Honard, Lois des Français, s. 238. Tytler, ii. 301. M'Pherson, i. 367.



sand men was frequently baffled, after a campaign of a few weeks, by the garrison of an insignificant fortress (1).

Want of  
yeomanry. But the circumstance of all others the most prejudicial to the liberty of France, was the exclusive use of arms by the higher orders, and the total absence of that middling class in the armies, who constituted not less the strength of the English forces than the support of the English monarchy. Before the time of Charles VI, the jealousy of the nobles had never allowed the peasants to be instructed in the use of arms, in consequence of which they had no archers, or disciplined infantry, to oppose to their enemies, and were obliged to seek in the mountains of Genoa for cross-bowmen, to withstand the terrible yeomanry of England. The defeats of Crecy and Poitiers, of Morat and Granson, were the consequence of this inferiority; not that the natives of France were inferior in natural bravery to the English or the Swiss, but that their armies, being composed entirely of the military tenants, had no force to oppose to the steady and experienced infantry, which in every age has formed the peculiar strength of a free people. Warned by these disasters, the French government, by an ordinance in 1394, ordered the peasantry throughout the whole country to be instructed in the use of the bow, and the pernicious practice of games of hazard to be exchanged for matches at archery. They made rapid progress in the new exercises, and would soon have rivalled the English bowmen; but the jealousy of the nobles took the alarm at the increasing energy of the lower orders. Martial exercises were prohibited, games of hazard re-established, the people lost their courage from want of confidence in themselves, and the defeat of Azincourt was the consequence (2).

Misery arising from the English wars. The circumstances which first awakened the genuine democratic spirit in France, were the misery and anarchy arising from the English wars. During these disastrous contests, in which the French armies were so frequently worsted, and military license, with all its horrors, for above a century wasted the heart of the country, the power of the nobles was for a time destroyed; and the extremities of distress roused the courage of the peasantry. Abandoned by their natural protectors, pillaged by bands of licentious soldiers, driven to desperation by suffering, and excited by the prospect of general plunder, the populace every where flew to arms, and the insurrection of the *Jacquerie* anticipated the horrors of the French Revolution. The effect of the despotic government of preceding ages became then conspicuous: Unlike the moderate reforms of the English barons, who themselves contended for freedom, the French peasantry fell at once into the horrors of popular licentiousness. The features, the well-known features of servile war, appeared; the gentry, hated for their tyranny, were every where exposed to the violence of popular rage; and instead of meeting with the regard due to their past dignity, became on that account only the object of more wanton insult to the peasantry. They were hunted like wild beasts, and put to the sword without mercy; their castles consumed by fire; their wives and daughters ravished or murdered; and the savages proceeded so far as to impale their enemies, and roast them alive over a slow fire. But these efforts were as impotent as they were ferocious. The nobles combined for their common defence; the peasantry, unacquainted with arms, and destitute of discipline, could not withstand the shock of the feudal cavalry; and the licentiousness of the people was repressed, after one-half of the

(1) Sism. vii. 112. Ber. Introd. 42.

(2) Sism. xii. 51. Ber. i. 79; ii. 217.

population of France had fallen a prey to the sword, or the pestilence which followed the wars of Edward the Third (1).

Effects of the suffering of the English wars. The misery occasioned by these contests, however, excited a spirit which long survived the disasters in which it originated. Nations, like individuals, are frequently improved in the school of adversity; and if the causes of the greatest advances in our social condition are accurately investigated, they may often be traced back to those long periods of difficulty, when energy has risen out of the extremity of disaster. Before the death of Edward the Third, the soldiers of France, from constant practice, had become superior to those of England; and the courage of the nation, debased by centuries of Roman servitude, was restored amidst the agonies of civil dissension. The spirit of freedom was communicated to the boroughs, the only refuge from insult (2), which had greatly swelled in importance during the devastation of the country, and emanating from the opulent cities of Flanders, threatened the aristocracy both of France and England with destruction.

Rise of the democratic spirit. The liberty of France and Flanders, to use a military expression, advanced with an oblique front; the wealthy cities of the Netherlands took the lead; Paris, Rouen, and Lyons, were next brought into action; and all the boroughs of the south of France were ready, at the first success, to join the bands of the confederates. The firmness of Ghent, and the victory of Bruges, roused the democratic spirit through all the adjoining kingdoms; the nobility of all Europe took the alarm, and the invasion of Flanders by the chivalry of France, was conducted on the same principles, and for the same object, as the invasion of France by the allies in 1793. But the period was not yet arrived when the citizens of towns could successfully contend with the forces of the aristocracy. In vain the burghers of Flanders routed their own barons, and with a force of sixty thousand men besieged the nobles of their territory in Oudenarde. The steel-clad squadrons of the French gendarmerie pierced their serried bands, and the victory of Rosbecq crushed the liberties of France for four centuries. The French municipal bodies, among whom the ferments had already begun, lost all hope when the burghers of Flanders were overthrown, and resigned themselves, without a struggle, to a fate, which, in the circumstances of the world, appeared inevitable. Twenty thousand armed citizens awaited the return of the victorious monarch into Paris; but the display of the burgher force came too late to protect public freedom (3); their leaders were imprisoned and executed, and the erection of the Bastille, in 1389, marked the commencement of a long period of servitude, which only its destruction in 1789 was intended to terminate.

The struggles of the people in France, in the reign of Charles VI, like the Revolution four centuries after, were totally distinct, both in character and object, from the efforts of the English in support of their liberties. The Norman barons extorted the great charter at Runnymede: the French peasantry formed the insurrection of the Jacquerie; the French boroughs alone supported the confederacy of Ghent. In the one case the barons marched at the head of the popular class, and stipulated for themselves and their inferiors the privileges of freedom; in the other, the nobles generally joined the throne, and combined to suppress a spirit which threatened their exclusive privileges. Moderation and humanity distinguished the first; cruelty and exasperation disgraced the last. So early in the history of the two countries

(1) Froissart, c. 182, 183, 184. Sism. France, x. 543, 548; xi. 60. Hume, ii. 463.

(2) Froissart, viii. 124. Sism. x. 549. Bar. i. 74.  
(3) Bar. i. 74, 295. Sism. xi. 397, 400, 409.

were their popular commotions marked by the character which has ever since distinguished them, and so strongly has the force of external circumstances impressed the same stamp upon the efforts of the people in the most remote ages (1).

Various circumstances conspired after this period to check the growth of public freedom, and to preserve those high aristocratic powers in France which ultimately led to the Revolution.

**Great feudalities. Their effect.** I. The French monarchy, during the feudal ages, was rather a confederacy of separate states than a single government. The great vassals exercised all the real powers of sovereignty independent of any foreign control, those of coining money, waging private war, and judging exclusively in civil causes. They were exempt from all public tribute except the feudal aids, and subject to no general legislative control. The consequences of this were in the highest degree important. No common necessity, the dread of no common enemy, compelled the great vassals to court the popular assistance, or arm their tenantry against the throne. The vast power which the Conquest gave to the crown in England at once curbed the turbulence of the barons, established one general law throughout the realm, and induced the nobles, for their own support, to arm the yeomanry. The weakness of the throne in France enabled the great vassals to usurp the powers of sovereignty, broke down into separate and provincial customs the general law of the country, and confined the use of arms to the landed gentlemen and their military retainers. Separate interests, endless contentions, and domestic warfare, occupied the whole attention of the nobility. No common concerns, the preservation of no common privileges, no general danger, cemented the disunited body. The monarchy grew grey in years without its subjects having experienced the feelings, or been actuated by the interests, or wielded the power, of an united people (2).

**Effect of the English wars.** II. The long and bloody wars with England, which lasted, with hardly any intermission, for one hundred and twenty years, were fatal to the growth of commercial or manufacturing industry in France, and to the independent spirit which naturally arises from it. The influence of war was chiefly felt in England by the increased demand for domestic industry, the prospects of plunder which continental expeditions afforded, and the high wages which were offered to rouse the energy of the yeomanry (3). The English invasions were contemplated in France with very different feelings; defeat and disgrace to the nobles; plunder and devastation to the burghers; misery and starvation to the peasantry. After the feudal nobility were destroyed in the field of Azincourt, the whole bonds of society were loosened; every castle or stronghold was fortified and became the residence of a partisan, generally as formidable to his countrymen as his enemies; warfare and rapine universally prevailed; and the miserable peasants, driven into walled towns for protection, could only venture into the fields to cultivate the ground, with scouts stationed on the tops of the steeples to warn them of the approach of danger. The consequences of this insecurity may still be seen in the total absence of cottages in all the north and east of France, as contrasted with the humble but comfortable dwellings which every where rise among the green fields and wooded landscape of England. Commercial opulence, the best nursery of freedom in civilized

(1) Bar. i. 74, 295.

(2) Hallam, i. 227. Hume, ii. 115.

(3) It appears from Rymer that the Earl of Salisbury gave a shilling a-day for every man-at-arms,

and sixpence for each archer; sums equivalent to fifteen shillings, and seven and sixpence of our money.—Rymer, i. 10, 392; Monstrellet, i. 303.

times, was extinguished during these disastrous contests; industry annihilated by the destruction of its produce, and the total insecurity of its reward; violence became universal, because it alone led to distinction. It was by high pecuniary sacrifices that mercenaries were obtained from foreign states; the Scottish auxiliaries stemmed the progress of disaster at Crevant and Verneuil; and the great military monarchy of France was compelled to seek for protection from the arms of a barbarous people. During such public calamities the growth of freedom was effectually stopped; and the wretched inhabitants, driven to struggle, year after year, for their existence with foreign and domestic enemies, had neither leisure to contemplate the blessings of liberty, nor means to acquire the wealth which could render it of value (1).

Standing  
armies.

III. When the enthusiasm of the Maid of Orleans, the valour of the nobles, and the domestic dissensions of England, had driven these hated invaders from their shores, the numerous bands of armed men in every part of the kingdom exposed the people to incessant depredation, and imperiously called for some vigorous exertion of the royal authority. From this necessity arose the Companies of Ordinance of Charles VII., the first example in modern Europe of a **STANDING ARMY**. These companies, which at first consisted only of sixteen thousand infantry and nine thousand cavalry, soon gave the crown a decisive superiority over the feudal militia, and being always embodied and ready for action, proved more than a match for the slow and uncertain armaments of the nobles. From this period the influence of the crown in France steadily increased; a series of fortunate accidents united the principal fiefs to the monarchy; and neither among the feudal barons, nor the burgher forces, could any counterpoise be found to its authority. The tumultuary array of feudal power, which is only occasionally called out, and very imperfectly disciplined, can never maintain a contest of any duration with a small force of regular soldiers who have acquired skill in the use of arms, and adhere to their colours equally through adverse as prosperous fortune. But to this inherent weakness in the feudal forces, was superadded in France the total want of any popular support to the nobles. The burghers, depressed and insulted by the privileged classes, could not be expected to join in their support; the peasants, unaccustomed to the use of arms, and galled by the recollection of rapine and injury, were both unable to combine against the throne (2), and unwilling to humble a power from which they themselves stood in need of protection. Hence, in a short time, the crown acquired despotic authority; and Louis XI., with a regular force of only twenty-four thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry, was absolute master of his dominions.

Military of  
the nation.

IV. The peculiar situation of France, in the midst of the great military monarchies of Europe, led to the constant maintenance of a large standing army, and perpetuated the preponderance thus acquired by the throne. Upon the decay of feudal manners, consequent on the progress of luxury and the destruction of the influence of the nobles, which resulted from the introduction of fire-arms, no power remained in the state capable of withstanding the regular forces of the monarchy. The nobles flocked to Paris to share in the splendour of the court, or join in the pleasures of the metropolis; the peasantry, undisciplined and depressed by their superiors, and buried in ignorance, lost the remembrance even of the name of freedom. The wars with England, however, had revived the military spirit, not only

(1) Hallam, i. 108. Villaret, xiv. 302. Sismondi, France, x. 543, 548.

(2) Charles V. i. 121, 123. Monstrelet, part ii. § 139. Hall, i. 117, 118. Philip de Commines, i. 384.

among the nobles, but the common people; the political events which followed, gave this spirit its natural direction, and France speedily appeared as a conquering power. The courage and energy of the nation rapidly followed this new line of ambition; the sovereign was permitted to increase the forces, which led the van in so brilliant a career; and the people, intoxicated by the conquests of Charles VIII and Francis I, forgot both the disasters which followed their transient success, and the decisive ascendancy which they gave to the government. The desire of military glory, fed by repeated triumphs, became the prevailing passion of the nation; the States-General, which, for half a century, had nearly acquired the authority of the English Parliaments, gradually fell into desuetude, and were abandoned, not so much from the encroachments of the crown as the neglect of the people. For nearly two hundred years before the commencement of the Revolution, they had never once been assembled, and the nation, dazzled by the pageant of military success, silently resigned to the crown the whole real powers of government (1).

Privileges of the Nobility. V. From the earliest times, the distinction between patrician and plebeian, between noble and base-born, had been established in France; and, by an unhappy custom, this privilege descended to all the children, instead of being confined, as in England, to the eldest son. The consequence was, a complete separation of the higher and lower orders, and the establishment of a line of demarcation, which neither talent, enterprise, nor success, was able to pass. "It is a terrible thing," says Pascal, "to reflect on the effect of rank; it gives to a child, newly born, a degree of consideration, which half a century of labour and virtue could not procure." Of all the circumstances in the early history of France, there was none which had a more powerful effect than this, in determining the character of the Revolution.

Failure of the Reformation in France. VI. The REFORMATION, so important in its consequences in other states, failed of producing any material effects in France, from the scanty numbers of the class who were fitted to receive its doctrines. In the maritime and commercial cities on the western coast, it struck its roots; but the peasantry of the country were too ignorant, the nobles of the metropolis too profligate, to embrace its precepts. The contest between the contending parties was disgraced by the most inhuman atrocities: the massacre of St. Bartholomew was unparalleled in horror till the Revolution arose, and forty thousand persons were murdered in different parts of France, in pursuance of the perfidious order of the court. Nor were the proceedings of the Huguenots more distinguished by moderation or forbearance; their early insurrections were attended by a general destruction of houses, property, and human life; and the hideous features of a servile war disgraced the first efforts of religious freedom. But it was in vain that the talents of Coligni, the generosity of Henry, the wisdom of Sully, supported their cause; the party which they formed in the nation was too small, their influence on the public mind too inconsiderable, to furnish the means of lasting success; and the monarch, who had reached the throne by the efforts of the Protestants, was obliged to consolidate his power, by embracing the faith of his adversaries. France was not enslaved, because she remained Catholic; but she remained Catholic, because she was enslaved: the seeds of religious freedom were sown with no sparing hand, and profusely watered by the blood of martyrs; but the soil was not fitted for their reception, and the shoots, though fair at first, were soon withered by the blasts of despotism. The history of her Reformation, as the annals of its suppression in Spain, exhibits the fruitless struggles of par-

(1) Hallam, i. 256. Mably, Villiers, ii. 128.

tial freedom with general servitude; of local intelligence with public ignorance; of the energy of advanced civilisation with the force of long-established despotism. The contest arose too soon for the interests of freedom, and too late for the reformation of power; the last spark of liberty expired in France with the capture of la Rochelle; and two centuries of unrelenting oppression were required to awaken the people generally, to a sense of the value of those blessings which their ancestors had forcibly torn from their Huguenot brethren (1).

But the influence of despotism in modern times cannot permanently extinguish the light of reason. The press has provided in the end an antidote to the worst species of government, except, perhaps, that which arises from its own abuse; its influence on every other oppression may be slow, but it is progressive, and ultimately irresistible. In vain the monarchs of France studiously degraded the lower orders; in vain they covered the corruption of despotism by the splendour of military glory; in vain they encouraged science, and rewarded art, and sought to turn the flood of genius into the narrow channels of regulated ambition; the vigour of thought outstripped the fetters of power; the energy of civilisation broke the bonds of slavery. The middling ranks, in the progress of time, became conscious of their importance; the restrictions of feudal manners revolting to men enlightened by the progress of knowledge; the chains of ancient servitude insupportable to those who felt the rising ambition of freedom. Not the embarrassment of the finances, not the corruption of the court, not the sufferings of the peasantry, brought about the Revolution, for they are to be found matched in many countries, disturbed by no convulsions; but the hateful pride of the aristocracy, based on centuries of exclusive power, and galling to an age of ascending ambition (2).

Causes of the  
savage  
character of the  
French Re-  
volution.

The extraordinary character of the French Revolution therefore arose, not from any peculiarities in the disposition of the people, or any faults exclusively owing to the government, but the weight of the despotism which had preceded, and the magnitude of the changes which were to follow it. It was distinguished by violence, and stained with blood, because it originated chiefly with the labouring classes, and partook of the savage features of a servile revolt; it totally subverted the institutions of the country, because it condensed within a few years the changes which should have taken place in as many centuries; it speedily fell under the direction of the most depraved of the people, because its guidance was early abandoned by the higher to the lower orders; it led to a general spoliation of property, because it was founded on an universal insurrection of the poor against the rich. France would have done less at the Revolution, if she had done more before it; she would not have so unmercifully unsheathed the sword to govern, if she had not so long been governed by the sword; she would not have fallen, for years, under the guillotine of the populace, if she had not groaned, for centuries, under the fetters of the nobility.

Beneficial  
effect of  
periods of  
suffering.

It is in periods of apparent disaster, during the suffering of whole generations, that the greatest improvements on human character have been effected, and a foundation laid for those changes which ultimately prove most beneficial to the species. The wars of the Heptarchy, the Norman Conquest, the Contests of the Roses, the Great Rebellion, are apparently the most disastrous periods of our annals; those in which civil discord was most furious, and public suffering most universal. Yet these are precisely

(1) Lac. Guerres de Religion, li. 50, 200, 350. (2) Rivarol, 92, 93.  
360. Sully, v. 123.

the periods in which its peculiar temper was given to the English character, and the greatest addition made to the causes of English prosperity; in which courage arose out of the extremity of misfortune, national union out of foreign oppression, public emancipation out of aristocratic dissension, general freedom out of regal ambition. The national character which we now possess, the public benefits we now enjoy, the freedom by which we are distinguished, the energy by which we are sustained, are in a great measure owing to the renovating storms which have, in former ages, passed over our country. The darkest periods of French annals, in like manner, those of the successors of Charlemagne, of the English wars, of the contests of religion, of the despotism of the Bourbons, are probably the ones which have formed the most honourable features of the French character; which have engrafted on the slavish habits of Roman servitude, the generous courage of modern chivalry; on the passive submission of feudal ignorance, the impetuous valour of victorious patriotism; which have extricated, from the collision of opinion, the powers of thought; and nursed, amidst the corruption of despotism, the seeds of liberty. Through all the horrors of the Revolution, the same beneficial law of Nature may be discerned; and the annals of its career will not be thrown away, if, amidst the greatest calamities, they teach confidence in the Wisdom which governs, and inspire hatred at the vices which desolate, the world.

## CHAPTER II.

### CAUSES IN FRANCE WHICH PREDISPOSED TO REVOLUTION.

#### ARGUMENT.

*Proximate Causes of the Revolution*—The general Rise of the Lower Orders arising from the general prosperity of France, and the fetters on the Middling Orders—Destruction of the powers of the great Feudatories—Military spirit of the People—Philosophy and Literature—State of the Church—Privileges of the Noblesse—Taxation—State of the labouring Poor—Feudal Services—Administration of Justice—Royal Prerogative—Corruption at Court in prior Reigns—Embarrassments of Finance—American War—German discipline—Excessive passion for innovation—Equally among the Nobles as the People—Character of Louis XVI.—Maurepas, his first Minister—Aided by Turgot, Necker, and Mallesherbes—Their proposed Reforms—Opposed by the Nobles—Death of Maurepas, and dissolution of his Ministry—Queen Marie Antoinette—Vergennes, Minister—Calonne's plans of Finance—They fail—Assembly of the Notables—Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, Minister—States-General demanded—Ineffectual struggle with the Parliaments—Growing spirit of the People—Coup d'état of Brienne—Fails—Convocation of the States-General agreed to—Necker's return—He doubles the Tiers-Etat—Opening of the States-General fixed for May, 1789—General discussion on the projected changes—The elections, and temper of the people—Effect of these concessions of Necker—Napoleon's opinion on them—Reflections on the difference between the love of freedom and the love of power—The Higher Orders headed the Revolution.

"The people," says the greatest of French statesmen, "never revolt from sickness, or the mere desire of change. It is the impatience of suffering which alone has this effect (1)." Subsequent events have not falsified the maxim of Sully, though they have shown that it requires modification. If the condition of the lower orders in France, anterior to the Revolution, is examined, it will not be deemed surprising that a convulsion should have arisen; and, if humanity sees much to deplore in the calamities it produced, it will find much cause for consolation in the grievances it has removed.

(1) Sully, i. 133.

The observation of the French statesman, however, is true only in reference to the commencement of revolutionary troubles. The people, over a whole country, never pass from a state of quiescence to one of tumult, without the experience of practical grievances. Disturbances never assume the magnitude of revolutions, unless these grievances affect the great body of the citizens. But when the minds of men have been once set afloat by successful resistance, subsequent innovations are made from mere temporary causes;—the restlessness following high excitation; the distress consequent on suspended credit; the audacity arising from unpunished crime. “The people,” said Robespierre, “will as soon revolt without oppression, as the ocean will heave in billows without the wind.”—“True,” replied Vergniaud, “but wave after wave will roll upon the shore, after the fury of the winds is stilled.”

Universality of the disaffection. The universality of the disaffection which prevailed in France, anterior to the Revolution, is a sufficient indication that causes were in operation affecting all classes in the state. Temporary distress occasions passing seditions; local grievances excite partial discontent; but general and long-continued suffering alone can produce a steady and extended resistance.

In France, at the convocation of the States-General, the desire for change was universal, excepting in part of the privileged orders. The cruelty of the Jacobins, and the precipitate measures of the Constituent Assembly, subsequently produced a very great division of opinion, and lighted the flames of civil war in Lyons and la Vendée; but, in the beginning, one universal voice in favour of freedom was heard from Calais to the Pyrenées. The nobles, for the most part, returned members in the interest of their order; the dignified clergy did the same; but the Tiers-État, and the curés, unanimously supported the cause of independence. The bitter rancour, which subsequent injustice produced, between the clergy and the supporters of the Revolution, was unknown in its earlier stages; the Tennis Court oath found no warmer supporters than in the solitudes of la Vendée; and the first body who joined the commons in their stand against the throne, were the representatives of the ordinary clergy of France (1).

Without doubt, the observation of a modern philosopher is well founded, that the march of civilisation necessarily produces a collision between the aristocratic and the popular classes, in every advancing community. Power founded in conquest, privileges handed down from barbarous ages, prerogatives suited to periods of anarchy, are incompatible with the rising desires springing from the tranquillity and opulence of civilized life. One or other must yield; the power of the noblesse must extinguish the rising importance of the commons, or it must be modified by their exertions. But it is not necessary that this change should be effected by a revolution. It is quite possible that it may be accomplished so gradually, as not only to produce no convulsion, but be felt only by its vivifying and beneficial effects upon society. It is sudden innovation which brings about the catastrophe; the rapidity of the descent which converts the stream into a cataract (2).

Middling ranks dangerous of elevation. Situated in the centre of European civilisation, it was impossible that France, in the eighteenth century, could escape the general tendency toward free institutions. How despotic soever her government may have been; how powerful her armies; how haughty her nobility, the natural progress of opulence, joined to the force of philosophical enquiry, spread an unruly spirit among the middling ranks. The strength

(1) Mig. i. 26. Th. i. 8, 41.

(2) Guiz, Hist. Mod. §24.



of the government, by suppressing private wars, and affording tolerable security to the fruits of industry, accelerated the period of a reaction against itself. The burghers, after the enjoyment of centuries of repose, and the acquisition of a competent share of wealth, felt indignant at the barriers which prevented them from rising into the higher ranks of society; the enterprising, conscious of powers suited to elevated stations, repined at their exclusion from offices of trust or importance; the studious, imbued with the spirit of ancient freedom, contrasted the brilliant career of talent in the republics of antiquity, with its fettered walk in modern times. All classes, except the privileged ones, were discontented with the government, in consequence of the expanded wants which a state of advancing civilisation produced. No institutions, in modern times, can remain stationary, excepting in countries such as the Eastern dynasties, which, by preventing the accumulation of wealth, prevent the possibility of individual elevation: if the lower orders are permitted to better their condition, their expansive force must, in the end, affect the government.

The universality of slavery prevented this progress from appearing in ancient times. The civilisation of antiquity was nothing but the aggregate of municipal institutions; its freedom, the exclusive privilege of the inhabitants of towns. Hence, with the progress of opulence, and the corruption of manners in the higher classes, the struggles of liberty gradually declined, and at last terminated in the authority of a single despot. Their freest ages were the earliest; their most enslaved, the latest of their history. No pressure from below was felt upon the exclusive privileges of the higher orders, because the classes from which it should have originated, were fettered in the bonds of slavery. Careless of the future, destitute of property, incapable of rising in society, provided for by others, the great body of the labouring classes remained in a state of pacific servitude, neither disquieting their superiors by their ambition, nor supporting them by their exertions (1).

Pressure from below strongly felt in modern times. In modern times, on the other hand, the emancipation of the labouring classes, through the influence of religion and the extension of information, has, by means of the press, opened the means of elevation to the great body of the people. Individual ambition, the desire of bettering their condition, have thus been let in to affect the progress of freedom. The ebullition of popular discontent becomes most powerful in the later periods of society, because it is then that the accumulated wealth of ages has rendered the lower orders most powerful. The progress of opulence, and the increase of industry, thus become favourable to the cause of liberty, because they augment the influence of those classes by whose exertions it must be maintained. The strife of faction is felt with most severity, in those periods, when the increasing pressure from below strains the bands by which it has been compressed, and danger or example has not taught the great the necessity of gradual relaxation. If they are slowly and cautiously unbent, it is Reformation; if suddenly removed, either by the fervour of innovation, or the fury of revolt, it is Revolution.

The operation of these causes may distinctly be perceived in the frame of society in every free country in modern times. Universally the chief spring of prosperity is to be found in the lower classes; it is the ascending spirit and increasing energy of the poor, when kept within due bounds by the authority of government and the influence of the aristocracy, which both lays the foundation of national wealth, and secures the progress of national glory.

(1) Guiz. Hist. Mod. 31, 54.

Ask the professional man what occasions the difficulty so generally experienced in struggling through the world, or even in maintaining his ground against his numerous competitors; he will immediately answer, that it is the pressure from below which occasions all his difficulty; his equals he can withstand; his superiors overcome; it is the efforts of his inferiors which are chiefly formidable. Those, in general, who rise to eminence in every profession are the sons of the middling or lower orders; men whom poverty has inured to hardship, or necessity compelled to exertion, and who have acquired, in the early school of difficulty, habits more valuable than all the gifts which fortune has bestowed upon their superiors (1).

Its important effects in modern times.

So universal is the influence of this principle, so important its effects upon the progress and prospects of society, that it may be considered as the grand distinction between ancient and modern times; all others sink into insignificance in comparison. The balance of power in a free country is totally altered in consequence of the prodigious addition thus made to the power and importance of the lower orders; a spring of activity and vigour is provided in the humble stations of life, which proves a rapid remedy for almost every national disaster, except those arising from their own licentiousness; a power developed in the democratic party in the commonwealth, which renders new bulwarks necessary to maintain the equilibrium of society.

Without some advantages to counteract the superior energy and more industrious habits of their inferiors, the higher ranks in a prosperous, opulent, and advancing state, must in general fall a prey to their ambition. The indolence of wealth, the selfishness of luxury, the pride of birth, will prove but feeble antagonists to the pressure of poverty, the self-denial of necessity, the ambition of talent. The successive elevation of the more fortunate or able of the lower orders to the higher ranks of society, is no sufficient antidote to the danger, for it is rare that energy survives the necessity which gave it birth; and nowhere does the enervating influence of wealth appear more strongly than in the immediate descendants of those who have raised themselves by their exertions. The incessant developement of vigour in the lower orders, indeed, if kept within due bounds, and directed in its objects by the influence of religion and the habits of virtue, will always bring a sufficient portion of talent and industry to uphold the fortunes of the state, but not to maintain the ascendancy of one class within its bosom; and in the strife of domestic ambition, the aristocracy will find but a feeble support in the descendants of those whom recent wealth has enriched, or recent services ennobled.

The enervating effect of wealth upon national character, and its tendency to extinguish the love of freedom, so justly and so feelingly complained of by the writers of antiquity, has not hitherto been so strongly experienced in modern times from the influence of the same cause. Corruption uniformly follows in the train of opulence; if those who have raised themselves by their exertions withstand the contagion, it rarely fails to affect their descendants. But the continual rise of citizens from the inferior ranks of society, for a time strongly counteracts the influence of this principle; how feeble or inefficient soever the higher ranks may become, a sufficient infusion of energy is long provided in the successive elevation of classes whom necessity has compelled to exertion. It is by precluding their elevation, or in con-

(1) The history and present state of England exhibit numerous and splendid examples of the great acquirements and deeds of persons connected by birth with the aristocratic classes; but this rather confirms than weakens the principle above stated.

But for the competition which they had to maintain with the middling and lower orders, there is no reason to suppose that they would have been superior to similar classes in France or the continental states.

sequence of corruption extending to their ranks, that an age of opulence sinks irrecoverably into one of degeneracy.

But immortality or perfection is not the destiny of nations in this world, any more than of individuals. The elevation and instruction of the people has opened fountains, from which the vigour of youth is long communicated to the social body; but it has neither purified its vices, nor eradicated the seeds of mortality. The tree of knowledge has brought forth its accustomed fruits of good and evil; the communication of intelligence to the mass of mankind, has opened the doors as wide to the corruptions as to the virtues of our nature; the progress of wickedness is as certain, and in some cases even more rapid, in the most educated than in the most ignorant states. The anxious desire for elevation and distinction, which the consciousness of knowledge gives to the middling ranks, long an antidote to the degeneracy of the higher, at length becomes the source of corruptions as great, and effeminacy as complete, as the slavish submission of despotic states. The necessary distinctions of society appear insupportable in an age of ascending ambition; and, in the strife which ensues, the bulwarks of freedom are overturned, not less by the party which invokes, than that which retards the march of democratic power. After the strife is over, it is too often discovered that the balance of freedom has been destroyed during its continuance, and that the elements of general liberty no longer exist, from the annihilation of all classes between the prince and the peasant. The lower orders then sink rapidly and irrecoverably into degeneracy, from the experienced impossibility of effecting any thing ultimately beneficial to themselves by contending for independence. According to the condition of society, the age of the state, and the degree of public virtue which prevails, such social contests are the commencement or the termination of an era of prosperity and glory—the expansion of bursting vegetation, or the fermentation which precedes corruption—the revolution which overthrew the tyranny of Tarquin, or the disastrous contests which prepared, in the extinction of patrician power, the final servitude of the empire.

These causes, however, whatever may be their ultimate effects, render a collision between the higher and lower orders unavoidable in every advancing state in modern times. The nobles are naturally tenacious of the privileges and dignities which have descended to them from their ancestors; the middling ranks as naturally endeavour to enlarge theirs, when their increasing wealth or importance enables them to demand it; the lower ultimately become clamorous for a participation in the franchises which they see exercised by their superiors. It was in the boroughs of Europe that the struggle first commenced, because there the protection of walls, and of assembled multitudes, had produced the earliest passion for independence: it next appeared in England, because there the security of an insular situation and the efforts of an industrious people, had vivified the seeds of Saxon liberty: it lastly spread to France, because its regular government and powerful armies had long secured the blessings of internal tranquillity and foreign independence.

Destruction  
of the power  
of the  
nobles.

I. The destruction of the power of the great vassals of the crown, and the consolidation of the monarchy into one great kingdom, during the reigns of Louis XI, Francis I, and Henry IV, was undoubtedly essential to the Revolution. This anomalous and unforeseen result, however, arose not from the oppression so much as the protection afforded by the government to the people. Had the central power been weaker, and the privileges of the great feudatories remained unimpaired, France, like

Germany, would have been split into a number of independent duchies, and all unity of feeling or national energy lost in the division of separate interests. A revolution could no more have arrived there than in Silesia or Saxony; whereas, by the destruction of the power of the great vassals, and the rise of a formidable military force at the command of the central government, the unity of the nation was preserved, its independence secured, and its industry protected. For a century and a half before the commencement of the Revolution, France had enjoyed the blessings of domestic tranquillity; no internal dissensions, no foreign invasions, had broken this long period of security and repose; war was known only as affording an outlet to the ardent and impatient spirits, or as yielding a rich harvest of national glory; the worst severities of aristocratic oppression had long been prevented by the cessation of private warfare. During this interval of peace, the relative situation and feelings of the different ranks in society underwent a total change; wealth silently accumulated in the lower orders, from the unceasing efforts of individual industry; power imperceptibly glided from the higher, in consequence of the absorption of their revenues in objects of luxury. When civil dissensions again broke out, this difference appeared in the most striking manner. It was no longer the territorial noblesse, headed by their respective lords, who took the field, or the burghers of towns, who maintained insulated contests for the defence of their walls; but the national guard, who every where flew to arms, animated by one common feeling, and strong in the consciousness of mutual support. They did not wait for their landlords to lead, or their magistrates to direct; but acting boldly for themselves, maintained the cause of democratic freedom against the powers they had hitherto been accustomed to obey.

Military spirit of the people.

II. The military spirit of the French people, and the native courage which a long series of national glories had fostered, rendered them capable both of the moral fortitude to commence, and the patient endurance to sustain, a conflict. But for this circumstance, the Revolution would never have been attempted, or, if begun, would have been speedily crushed by the military force at the disposal of the monarchy. In many countries of Europe, such as Italy, Portugal, and Spain, the people have lost, during centuries of peace, the firmness requisite to earn their freedom. They complain of their oppressors, they lament their degeneracy, they bewail their liberties, but they have not the boldness to attempt their vindication. Unless under the guidance of foreign officers, they are incapable of any sustained or courageous efforts in the field: when that guardianship is removed, they sink immediately into their native imbecility. But the case was very different with the French. The long and disastrous wars with the English; the religious contests of the 16th century; the continued conflicts with the European powers, had spread a military spirit throughout the people, which neither the enjoyment of domestic peace, nor the advantages of unbroken protection, had been able to extinguish. In every age the French have been the most warlike people of Europe; and the spirit of military enterprise is nearly allied to that of civil freedom. Military courage may, and often does, subsist without domestic liberty; but domestic liberty cannot long subsist without military courage.

Philosophy and literature.

III. Though the Reformation was extinguished in France, freedom of thought and the spirit of investigation were unrestrained in the regions of taste and philosophy. Louis XIV made no attempt to curb the literary genius of his age, and the intellectual vigour which was exhibited during his reign, on general subjects, has never been surpassed. In the mental strife

which occurred during the Revolution, no more energetic speculation is to be found than in the writings of Corneille and Pascal. But it is impossible that unfettered enquiry can long subsist without political controversy becoming the subject of investigation. Religion and politics; the condition of man, here and hereafter, ever must form the most interesting objects of thought. This change, accordingly, took place under the feeble successors of the Grand Monarque. In the philosophical speculations of the eighteenth century, in the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, Raynal, and the Encyclopædists, the most free and unreserved discussion on political subjects took place. By a singular blindness, the constituted authorities, how despotic soever, made no attempt to curb these enquiries, which being all couched in general terms, or made in reference to other states, appeared to have no immediate bearing on the tranquillity of the kingdom. Strong in the support of the nobility, the protection of the army, and the long established tranquillity of the country, they deemed their power beyond the reach of attack, and anticipated no danger from dreams on the social contract, or the manners and spirit of nations. A direct attack on the monarchy would have been followed by an immediate place in the Bastille; but general disquisitions excited no alarm either among the nobility or in the government. So universal was this delusion, that the young nobility amused themselves with visionary speculations concerning the original equality and pristine state of man; deeming such speculations as inapplicable to their case as the license of Otaheite, or the equality of Tartary (1).

It is not surprising that the higher ranks mistook the signs of the times. They were advancing into a region in which the ancient landmarks were unknown; where the signs of a new heaven, and hitherto unseen constellations, were to guide the statesman. Judging from the past, no danger was to be apprehended; for all former convulsions of a serious description had been headed by a portion at least of the higher ranks. Judging from what we now know of the future, the speck was already to be seen in the horizon which was to overwhelm the universe with darkness.

The speculations of these eloquent philosophers spread widely among the rising generation. Captivated by the novelty of the ideas which were developed, dazzled by the lustre of the eloquence which was employed, seduced by the examples of antiquity which were held up to imitation, the youth warmly embraced not only free, but republican principles. The injustice of feudal oppression, the hardship of feudal exclusion, produced a corresponding reaction in the public mind. In the middling ranks, in particular, upon whom the chains of servitude hung heaviest, and who longed most for emancipation, because they would be the first to profit by it, the passion for ancient freedom was wrought up to the highest pitch. Madame Roland, the daughter of an engraver, and living in an humble station, wept at nine years of age because she was not born a Roman citizen, and carried Plutarch's *Lives*, instead of her breviary, in her hand, when she attended mass in the cathedral (2).

The tenor of the prevailing ideas which have moved the public mind, may always be known from the style of eloquence adopted, and the allusions made use of by those who direct it. During the great Rebellion in England, the language universally employed by the popular leaders was that of gloomy fanaticism; their images and allusions were all drawn from the Old Testament. Fanaticism was the engine by which alone at that period the great

(1) *Ségar's Memoirs*, i. p. 62, Lac. i, 12, 10.

(2) *Madame Roland*, i. 88, 89. Introduction, p. 18.

body of the people could be moved. In France, religion was never once alluded to by the popular party; or if it was, it was only to be made the subject of derision and obloquy. Classical images, reference to the freedom and spirit of antiquity, form the great means of public excitation; the names of Brutus and Cato, of Scipio and Themistocles, were constantly flowing from their lips; the National Assembly never resounded with such tumultuous applause as when some fortunate allusion to the heroes of Greece or Rome was made; the people never were wrought up to such a state of fervour as when they were called on to follow the examples of the patriots of the ancient republics. Even in periods of extreme peril, with the prospect of immediate death before their eyes, the same splendid imagery was employed; and it is impossible to read, without emotion, the generous sentiments which the victims of popular violence frequently uttered, at their last moments in the words of ancient eloquence (1).

State of the  
Church.

IV. The CHURCH in France experienced the fate of all attempts, in an advancing age, to fetter the human mind; the resistance to its authority became general, and, in the fervour of opposition, the good and the bad parts of its doctrines were indiscriminately rejected. This is the usual consequence of attempts to force incredible and absurd doctrines upon public belief. As long as the minds of the people are in a state of torpor or inactivity, they embrace, without scruple, whatever is taught by their spiritual guides; but when the spirit of investigation is roused, and the light of reason breaks in, the reaction becomes just as strong in the opposite direction, and infidel supplies the place of superstitious fanaticism. Religious, as well as political reformers, seldom content themselves with amending what is really defective in the subject of their improvement; in the fervour of innovation they destroy the whole, because part has been found corrupted. It was thus with the Catholic Church of France; supported, as it had been, by the greatest names, and adorned by the most splendid ability, teaching, for the most part, the most simple and beneficent system of belief, it fell into general obloquy, in consequence of the irrational nature of some of its tenets. How strong soever the force of superstition may be, the power of reason is still stronger; if the former is to be supported, the latter must be enchained.

Hence, the rise of philosophical investigation in France was attended by an extraordinary degree not merely of free, but irreligious thought. The writings of Raynal, Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau, are too well known to render any illustration of this necessary. Such productions are not permanently hurtful to the cause of religion; the reaction comes with unerring certainty; and the cause of Christianity, purified in the furnace of its human imperfections, at length comes forth in primeval simplicity and with renovated strength. Already the reaction has begun, and the calm eye of philosophical investigation, undeterred by the sneers of an infidel age, has traced in the French capital, to admiring multitudes, the historical blessings of religious institutions. But the immediate effects of these sceptical writings were to the last degree destructive. By accustoming men to turn into ridicule what others most revere; by leading them to throw off the principles and faith of their forefathers, they prepared the way for a general dissolution, not only of the bonds of religion, but of society. It is a slight step for those who have discarded restraint in religious, to disregard authority in civil concerns (2).

Within the bosom of the church, too, and in all who fell within the sphere of its influence, the seeds of deep-rooted discontent were to be found. This

(1) Lingard, xi. 360.

(2) Guiz. Hist. Europ.

arose from the invidious exclusion of all persons of plebeian birth from the dignities and emoluments of the ecclesiastical establishment. In extraordinary cases, indeed, the force of talent may have procured elevation, without the advantages of blood; but, generally speaking, the dignitaries of the church were composed of the same class as the marshals or princes of the empire. While the bishops and elevated clergy were rolling in wealth, or glittering in the sunshine of royal favour, the humbler clergy, to whom the whole practical duties of Christianity were devolved, toiled in virtuous obscurity, hardly elevated either in rank or comfort above the peasantry who composed their flocks (1). The simple piety and unostentatious usefulness of these rural priests, while it endeared them to their parishioners, formed a striking contrast to the luxurious habits and dissipated lives of the high-born dignitaries of the church. Their enormous wealth excited the envy both of their own establishment and of the lower classes of the people, while the general idleness in which they passed their lives, afforded no possibility of justifying the scandalous inequality of their fortunes. Hence the universal indignation, in 1789; at the vices and corruption of the church, and the facility with which, in the very commencement of the Revolution, their property was sacrificed to relieve the embarrassments of the finances (2).

Privileges  
of the  
nobles. V. Insult is more keenly resented than injury. The pride of nobility is more difficult to tolerate than all the exclusive advantages which they possess. "Numerous and serious as the grievances of the French nation were," says the ablest of the royalist writers, "it was not they that occasioned the Revolution. Neither the taxes, nor the lettres de cachet, nor the other abuses of authority, nor the vexations of the préfets, nor the ruinous delays of justice, have irritated the nation; it is the *prestige* of nobility which has excited all the ferment,—a fact which proves that it was the shopkeepers, the men of letters, the monied interest, in fine, all those who were jealous of the nobility, who roused against them the lower classes in the towns, and the peasantry in the country. In truth, it is an extraordinary circumstance, that the nation should say to a child possessed of parchment,—'You shall one day be either a prelate, a marshal, or an ambassador, as you choose,' while it has nothing to offer to its other children." In fact, the men of talent and the men of fortune found this distinction so insupportable, that they invariably purchased a patent of nobility when they had the means of doing so; but from this arose a new difficulty, and fresh dangers to the monarchy. The wealth which purchased titles could not confer eminence; it could not give historic names, or remove the stain of ignoble birth. Hence the distinction between the old families and those newly ennobled, and a division in the aristocracy, which prevented them from ever adopting any common measures for their safety. The great families were more jealous of the *parvenus* than of the inferior classes of the people (3). From the last they anticipated no danger; the first were placed in a situation approaching too closely to their exclusive domain.

The distinction of nobility and base-born was carried to a length in France, of which it is difficult, in this free country, to form a conception.

(1) The total revenues of the church, derived from tithes, were 130,000,000 francs, of which only 42,000,000 were in the hands of the parochial clergy (Necker): the number of the ecclesiastics was 80,000. [Siéyès, 81. Bibliothèque d'un Homme public, par Condorcet, iii. 132.] But this revenue, large as it was, was inconsiderable, compared to the extent of the territorial possessions of this body, which embraced nearly a half of the whole land of

France. [Chateaubriand, *Études Hist.* iii. 284.] The nobles and the clergy possessed two-thirds of the whole estates of the kingdom; and the other third was in the hands of the Tiers-Etat, upon whom fell the greater proportion of the burdens of the state. [Thiers, i. 34.]

(2) Rivarol, 93. De Staël, i. 13.

(3) Rivarol, 93, 94. De Staël, i. 44, 198.

Every person was either noble or *roturier*; no middling class, no shades of distinction were known. On the one side were 150,000 privileged individuals; on the other, the whole body of the French people. All situations of importance in the church, the army, the court, the bench, or the diplomatic line, were exclusively enjoyed by the former of these classes. In a flourishing and prosperous country, such a system is of itself sufficient to produce a revolution. Men of fortune will not long submit to the insolence of aristocratic pride—men of talent, in the end, will scorn the trammels of patronage and the condescension of fashion. When a public has arisen, and the means of arriving at distinction, independent of the support of the nobility, exist, talent will generally incline, in a country so situated, to the side, whatever it is, which is opposed to the government. This tendency may be observed in all free countries, and in none more than the recent history of England. It is provided for in the independence of thought which is the general accompaniment of real talent, and is the counterpoise provided by nature to the influence of government, which might otherwise prove overwhelming. This change, accordingly, had taken place in France before the Revolution. The industrious classes, the men of talent, the men of wealth, were unanimous in their hatred of the nobility; the universal cry was for Liberty and EQUALITY,—an exclamation almost unknown in the English Rebellion. Equality of rank, abolition of privileges, equal eligibility for office, were the universal passion of the nation, because they were the pressing evils which had excited the discontents, and thwarted the vanity which has always, by their own admission, been the leading feature of the French character. The insurrection was less against the throne than against the nobility,—against the oppressive weight of feudal tyranny, inconsistent with the spirit of the age, and bequeathed by the power of barbarian conquest (1).

**Taxation.** VI. The taxation of France afforded a practical grievance of the most serious kind, rendered yet more galling by the inequality with which it was imposed. The two privileged orders, of the nobles and the clergy, were exempted from several of the most oppressive imposts,—a privilege grounded on the feudal fiction, that the former defended the state by their swords, while the latter interceded for it by their prayers. Such a reason was peculiarly untenable, after a long period of peace, during which the nobility were exclusively occupied in the frivolities of the court; and many of the higher clergy suspected, with too much reason, of sharing in its vices. The actual addition which the exemption of so large a proportion of the most opulent classes made to the burdens of the people, though by no means inconsiderable, was the least part of the evil; the bitterness lay in the sense of its injustice (2).

But much misrepresentation has taken place on this subject, and the freedom from taxation by the privileged orders been generally described as much more extensive than it really was. They certainly did not contribute equally with each other, or with the commons; but they both paid largely to the public service,—neither the nobility nor clergy enjoyed any exemption from any of the indirect impositions which in France, as in other countries, constituted so large a proportion of the public revenue. The nobility paid the capitation tax and the twentieth penny or *vingtième*, which, sometimes amounted to four shillings in the pound. The clergy in the provinces annexed by conquest to France, comprehending about an eighth of the territory and a sixth of the wealth of the kingdom, also paid the capitation and the *vingtième*; and although the clergy in the old provinces did not pay the capi-

(1) *Thiers*, i. 34, 35. *Nap.* in *D'Abr.* vii. 169. *Rivarol*, 7.

(2) *Mouthion*, Chancellor to Count d'Artois, 154. *De Staël*, i. 150. *Thiers*, i. 34.



tation, this was because they had redeemed it for payment of 24,000,000 of livres, or L.4,000,000 sterling;—they did not pay the vingtième, but they, in return, made free gifts and were subject to other charges, which amounted to nearly as much as their proportion of what was paid by the other orders. The real ground of complaint, and it was a most substantial one, was the exemption of both the privileged orders from the taille: a direct burden on the produce of land, of the most odious and impolitic kind, and the weight of which, being borne exclusively by the Tiers-État, led to the general impression that the privileged orders were entirely freed from taxation of any sort (1).

The taxes of France were not only heavy, but unequally distributed even upon the classes who bore them, and in an especial manner oppressive to the cultivators of the soil. The taille and the vingtième imposts, exclusively affecting agricultural labour, and following its profits, with other smaller burdens, amounted to no less than 171,000,000 of francs, or L.7,503,000 sterling, a sum at least equivalent to L.13,000,000 on the land of England. So excessive was the burden which this created upon agricultural labour, that it has been calculated, by a very competent observer, that, supposing the produce of an acre worth L.3, 2s. 7d., the proportion which went to the king was L.1, 18s. 4d.; to the landlord, 18s.; to the actual cultivator, 5s.; or, if the proprietor cultivated his own land, his share was only L.1, 4s. 3d., while that of the king was L.1, 18s. 4d. In other words, if the produce of an acre had been divided into twelve parts, nearly seven-and-a-half went to the king, three-and-a-half to the proprietor, and one to the farmer; whereas in England, at the same period, if the produce of an acre were L.8, the land-tax and poor's-rates would be 10s., the rent L.1, 10s. and the share of the cultivator L.6, being three-fourths of the produce, instead of one-twelfth, as under the French monarchy. Nearly one third of France, at this period, was in the hands of small proprietors, upon whom these taxes fell with unusual severity (2).

The taxes on consumption amounted to 260,000,000 francs, or L.10,400,000, and the total avenue to 469,000,000 francs, or L.18,730,000; but this immense burden was imposed without any regard to equality in the different provinces. Some had obtained commutations unreasonably favourable to themselves; others, from having evinced a refractory spirit, had been saddled with more than a just proportion of the public burdens. Those who had obtained no commutation, were liable to a progressive and most vexatious increase of their imposts. The fixing of these burdens was in the hands of the intendants of the provinces, from whose decision there was, practically speaking, no appeal, and who frequently exercised their powers in an arbitrary manner (3). Royal commissions had been established to take cognizance of questions regarding the revenues, of which the decision properly belonged to the ordinary tribunals; several contributions were judged of by the king in council,—a species of judicature, in which justice was not likely to be obtained.

VII. When the weight of the taxes under which they groaned is considered, it will not appear surprising that the cultivators of France were in the most miserable state. Mr. Young calculated, in 1789, that the rural labourer in France, taking into view the price of provisions, was 76 per cent poorer than in England; that is, he had 76 per cent less of the ne-

(1) Burke's *Considerations*, Works, v. 222, 223. Duc de Gaeta, ii. 311.

(2) Arthur Young, i. 332, 574, 575. Rap. du

Comité de l'imposit. Pièces Just. No. 1. Marshall's Travels, iv. 332, 333.

(3) Monthion, 155. Th. i. 34. De Staël, i. 152. Young, i. 575, 576, 598.

cessaries and conveniencies of life than fell to the lot of a similar class in this country; and rural labour being 76 per cent cheaper in France than England, it follows that all those classes which depend on that labour, and are the most numerous in society, were, in a similar proportion, less at their ease, worse fed, worse lodged, worse clothed, than their brethren on this side of the Channel. With a very few exceptions, accordingly, the peasantry were in the most indigent condition,—their houses dark, comfortless, and almost destitute of furniture—their dress ragged and miserable—their food the coarsest and most humble fare. “It reminded me,” says Mr. Young, “of the miseries of Ireland!” Nor was the condition of the people more comfortable in those extensive districts of the country where small properties existed; on the contrary, they were uniformly distinguished by the most numerous and squalid population. Nor is that surprising; nothing can conduce so much to a redundant population as a minute division of landed property and an oppressive government; the means of subsistence, without the means of enjoyment; scope to the principle of increase, without any development of its limitations (1).

Non-resident proprietors. VIII. In addition to an indigent peasantry, France was cursed with its usual attendant, a non-resident body of landed proprietors. This was an evil of the very first magnitude, drawing after it, as is invariably the case, a discontented tenantry and a neglected country. The great proprietors all resorted to Paris in quest of amusement, of dissipation, or of advancement; and, with the exception of la Vendée, where a totally different system of manners prevailed, the country was hardly ever visited by its landlords. The natural consequence of this was, that no kindly feelings, no common interest, united the landlord and his tenantry. The former regarded the cultivators in no other light than as beasts of burden, from whose labour the greatest proportion of profit was to be extracted; the latter considered their lords as tyrants, known only by the vexatious visits and endless demands of their bailiffs. From being neglected by their natural guardians, and experiencing no benefits or encouragement from them, the labouring classes every where imbibed a sour and discontented spirit; and were ready to join any incendiaries who promised them the pillage of their chateaux, or the division of their estates. Nor was this all: All those useful and beneficial undertakings, so common in England, which unite together the landed aristocracy and their tenantry, by the benefit they confer upon the estates of the former, and the employment they afford to the industry of the latter, were unknown in France. No improvements in agriculture, no advances of capital, were made by the proprietors of the soil; roads, harbours, canals, and bridges, were undertaken and managed exclusively by the government; and the influence naturally arising from the employment of industry and the expenditure of capital, was wholly lost to the French noblesse. In la Vendée alone, the landlords lived in pristine simplicity, consuming, in rustic profusion, the produce of their estates upon their own lands; and, in la Vendée alone, the tenantry supported them in the hour of trial, and waged a doubtful and glorious war with the Republican forces (2).

Feudal services. IX. The local burdens and legal services, due by the tenantry to their feudal superiors, were to the last degree vexatious and oppressive. The peasantry in France were almost all ignorant; not one in fifty could read, and in each province they were unaware of what was passing in the neighbouring one. At the distance of fifty miles from Paris, they were

(1) Young, i. 93, 148, 413, 447. Marshall, i. 232; iv. 101.

(2) Barante, in Madame de La Rochejaquelein, p. 45, 46. Scott's Napoleon, i. 31. Young, i. 598.

unacquainted with what was going forward during the most interesting era of the Revolution. They rose at the instigation of the demagogues in the neighbouring towns to burn the châteaux of their landlords; but never carried their ideas beyond the little circle of their immediate observation (1). No public meetings were held, no periodical press was within their reach to spread the flame of discontent; yet the spirit of resistance was universal from Calais to Bayonne. This affords decisive evidence of the existence of a serious mass of oppression or numerous local grievances, capable of producing discontent so general, and hatred so implacable. The feudal rights of the landed proprietors stood foremost in this list of grievances. The most important operations of agriculture were fettered or prevented by the game laws, and the restrictions intended for their support. Game of the most destructive kind, such as wild boars and herds of deer, were permitted to go at large, through large districts called *Capitaineries*, without any enclosures to protect the crops. The damage they did to the farmers, in four parishes of Monceaux only, amounted to 184,000 francs, or nearly L.8000*l.* a-year (2). Numerous edicts existed, which prohibited hoeing and weeding, lest the young partridges should be destroyed; mowing hay, lest the eggs should be destroyed; taking away the stubble, lest the birds should be deprived of shelter; manuring with night soil, lest their flavour should be injured (3). Complaints for the infraction of these edicts were all carried before the manorial courts, where every species of oppression, chicanery, and fraud, were prevalent (4). Nothing can exceed the force of expression used in the cahiers of the provincial bodies, in describing the severity of these feudal services. Fines were imposed at every change of property, in the direct and collateral line; at every sale, to purchasers; the people were bound to grind their corn at the landlord's mill, press their grapes at his press, and bake their bread at his oven (5). *Corvées*, or obligations to repair the roads, founded on custom, decrees, and servitude, were enforced with the most rigorous severity (6); in many places the use even of handmills was not free, and the seigneurs were invested with the power of selling to the peasants the right of bruising buck wheat or barley between two stones (7). It is vain to attempt a description of the feudal services which pressed with so much severity upon industry in every part of France. Their names cannot find parallel words in the English language (8). Long before the Revolution broke out, complaints were loudly heard over the whole country, of the baneful tendency of these feudal exactions. They became better understood by the higher classes as it advanced, from the clamour which was raised by the nobility at their abolition.

The *Corvées*, or burdens imposed for the maintenance of the highways, annually ruined vast numbers of the farmers. In filling up one valley in Lorraine, no less than three hundred were reduced to beggary (9). The enrolments for the militia were also the subject of grievous complaint, and styled in the cahiers "an injustice without example (10)." But the people soon found

(1) Young, i. 58. Marshall, iv. 68.

(2) Cahier du Tiers-État de Meaux, 49.

(3) Young, i. 600.

(4) Cahiers, Rennes, art. 12. Nivernois, art. 43.

(5) Young, i. 601.

(6) Tiers-État, Rennes, 159.

(7) Rennes, 57.

(8) We should be at a loss to know what was meant by "Chevauchée, Quintaine, Soulte, Saut de poissons, Baiser de mains, Chevalance, Transports d'œufs sur charrette, Droit de gnerie, Corvées à Miséricorde, Milods, Leude, Cauponage, Carnalage,

Barage, Fouage, Mareschaussée, Ban-vin, Bandon, Trousse, Gelinage, Civerage, Taillabilité, Vintaine, Sesterage, Bordelage, Mesuage, Ban de vendanger, Droit d'acapte." [Résumé des Cahiers, iii, 316, 317.] if the universal voice of the French people, manifested in their cahiers, or official instructions to the Deputies at the States-General from the electors, had not proclaimed that they signified real and oppressive burdens. [Young, i. 206.]

(9) Rennes, i. 588.

(10) Nob. Briey, 6, 7. Young, ii. 598.

that they had made a grievous exchange in substituting for it the terrible conscription of Napoleon.

Indeed, although these services were numerous and vexatious, they did not constitute so considerable a grievance, as the indignant feelings of the French provincial writers would lead us to imagine. "The people of Scotland," says Sir Walter Scott, "were in former times subject to numerous services which are now summed up in the emphatic word rent;" and this, in truth, was equally the case with the French tenantry. Their general condition was that of *Métayers*; that is, they received their implements and stock from their landlords, and divided with him the gross produce, after the tax-gatherer was satisfied. The numerous feudal services were just a payment of rent in kind; a species of liquidation universal and unavoidable in all rural districts in a certain stage of civilisation, when a ready market for agricultural produce is, from the absence of great towns, or the want of internal communication, no to be found. The people expected, when feudal services and tithes were abolished, during the Revolution, that their amount would form a clear addition to their gains; but they soon found that they only augmented the rent of their landlords, and that their own condition was in no degree ameliorated. Without doubt, the multitude of demands on the French tenantry was often in the highest degree vexatious; but it may be doubted whether their weight has been alleviated by their condensation into a single payment; and whether the terrors of the words RENT and TAXES do not now equal those of the whole catalogue of feudal obligations (1).

Adminis-  
tration of jus-  
tice.

X. The administration of justice, as in all countries where public opinion has not its due weight or the judges are exempted from its control, was liable to many abuses in France. In some places it was partial, venal, and infamous. Fortune, liberal presents, court favour, the smiles of a handsome wife, or promises of advancement to relations, sometimes swayed the decisions of the judges. This evil was felt in many parts of the country. The common opinion, though often unfounded, was, that to obtain justice in any of the provincial courts was out of the question. Nor were the decisions of the Parliaments more unsullied. These numerous and public-spirited bodies, notwithstanding their loud professions of patriotism, were not always exempt from corruption; and the diversity of their customs introduced a degree of variance into their determinations, which rendered all attempt at uniformity impracticable (2). But although, like the other institutions of the monarchy, the provincial Parliaments stood much in need of amendment, yet they had several particulars in their constitution deserving of the highest approbation, and which had rendered them the cradles of freedom during the corruptions and oppression of preceding reigns. They possessed one fundamental excellence, they were independent. The most doubtful circumstance connected with their mode of appointment, that of its being purchased, contributed to this independence of character. They held for life, indeed many may be said to have held by inheritance. Though appointed by the monarch, they were nearly out of his power. The more determined the exertions of that authority against them became, the more their spirit of freedom and independence became manifest. They composed permanent bodies politic, and from that corporate and lasting constitution were well calculated to afford both certainty and stability to the laws. They

(1) The land-tax in France is now twenty-five per cent, at the very lowest, on the gross agricultural profits; often forty or fifty per cent on the landown-

ers' gains. — See vol. iv. chap. xxxv, and authorities there quoted.

(2) Monthion, 154. Thiers, i. 35. Young, i. 596. 602.

had been a safe asylum to these laws in all the revolutions of opinion and all the frowns of power. They had saved that sacred deposit of the country during the reigns of arbitrary princes and the struggles of arbitrary factions. They were the great safeguard to private property : their decisions, though varying with the customs of the different provinces, were, generally speaking, honest and upright : they had furnished no inconsiderable corrective to the vices and excesses of the monarchy. The independent spirit which terminated in the Revolution began in the free and courageous conduct of their assemblies during a contest of nearly half a century with the ordinances of the crown ; and it is one of the strongest proofs of the insanity which ultimately got possession of the public mind (1), that one of the first acts of the democratic party, upon attaining supreme authority, was to sweep away these venerable bulwarks by which they had so long been sheltered from the invasion of despotic power.

Royal prerogative.

XI. The royal prerogative, by a series of successful usurpations, had reached a height inconsistent with any thing like real freedom. The most important right of a citizen, that of deliberating on the passing of laws, and the granting of supplies, had fallen into desuetude. For nearly two centuries, the kings, of their own authority, had published *ordinances* possessing all the authority of laws, and which originally could not be sanctioned but by the representatives of the people. The right of approving or registering, as it was called, these ordinances, was transferred to the Parliaments and courts of justice ; but their deliberations were liable to be suspended by *lits de justice*, or personal interventions of the sovereign, and infringed by arbitrary imprisonments. The regulations which could legally be made only by the king in council, were frequently adopted without the intervention of that body ; and so usual had this abuse become, that in many branches of government it was habitual. Taxes were imposed without the consent of the nation, or of its representatives ; those originally laid on by legal authority continued after the stipulated period of their endurance had ceased, or were augmented far beyond the amount agreed to by the people. Criminal commissions, composed of persons nominated solely by the crown, were frequently appointed, and rendered both personal liberty and real property insecure. Warrants of imprisonment, without either accusation or trial, might deprive any subjects of their freedom, and consign them to a dungeon for the remainder of their lives. Debts to an enormous amount, and of which the annual charge absorbed more than half the revenue of the state, had been contracted without national authority, or increased without its knowledge. The public creditors, kept in the dark as to the state of the finances, or of the security which existed for their payment, were daily becoming more apprehensive of the ultimate solvency of the state. The personal expenses of the kings had risen under the reigns of Louis XIV and XV to a very great height, and they were not distinguished from the ordinary expenditure of government, except in a secret record, no part of which was divulged to the people. The salaries of all the civil servants of the crown, and of the higher officers in the army, were deemed excessive ; while the duties of their several offices were either neglected or performed by deputy (2).

Corruption at court.

XII. Corruption, in its worst form, had long tainted the manners of the court as well as the nobility, and poisoned the sources of influence. The favour of royal mistresses, or the intrigues of the court, openly disposed of the highest appointments both in the army, the church, and the

(1) Burke's Considerations, Works, vi. 367.

(2) De Staël, i. 130, 153. Monthlon, 153, 154. Th., i. 154. État de la Dette, 1790. 8.

civil service. Since the reign of the Roman emperors, profligacy had never been conducted in so open and undisguised a manner as under Louis XV and the Regent Orleans. From the secret memoirs of the period, which have now been published, it is manifest that the licentious novels which at that time disgraced French literature, conveyed a faithful picture of the manners of the age; that the scenes in *Faublas*, the *Liaisons dangereuses*, and *Crébillon*, are by no means overcharged. Favourites of women of rank, selected often from the middling classes of society, were rewarded for their fidelity by a place in the Bastille, at the instance of their treacherous paramours (1).

The reign of Louis XV is the most deplorable in French history. If we seek for the characters who governed the age, we must search the antechambers of the Duc de Choiseul, or the boudoirs of Madame de Pompadour or Du Barri. The whole frame of society seemed to be decomposed. Statesmen were ambitious to figure as men of letters; men of letters as statesmen; the great seigneurs as bankers; the farmers-general as great seigneurs. The fashions were as ridiculous as the arts were misplaced. Shepherdesses were represented in hoops in saloons, where colonels were engaged in feminine pursuits; every thing was deranged in the public feeling and manners, the sure sign of an approaching convulsion. Society had reached that puerile stage which appeared in Rome at the time of the Gothic invasion, and in Constantinople under the Byzantian emperors; instead of making verses in cloisters, they made them in drawing-rooms; a happy epigram rendered a general more illustrious than a victory gained (2).

It was the peculiarity of that age, that manners had assumed this frivolous and corrupt tone in the higher, at the same time that nobler and more generous sentiments had, from the progress of knowledge and the spread of civilisation, sprung up in the middling ranks. Madame Roland, a citizen's daughter, has given a graphic picture of the horror with which the rising ambition and conscious talent of the middling ranks regarded the frivolity and vices of their hereditary rulers. "It excited my early astonishment," says she, "that such a state of things did not occasion the immediate fall of the empire, or provoke the avenging wrath of Heaven (3)."

The effects of this general dissolution of principles appeared in the strongest manner, both in the habits of the people, and in the literature of the age. From thence has flowed that stream of depravity and licentiousness which has so long been peculiarly and characteristically the disgrace of French literature; and from these examples has followed that universal license of manners, which has now descended with the general growth of irreligion so far, that the illegitimate births in Paris will apparently soon be equal to the legitimate, and already every third child to be seen in the streets is a bastard (4)."

Embarrassment of finances.

XIII. Embarrassment in the finances was the immediate cause of the Revolution. It compelled the king to summon the states-general as the only means of avoiding national bankruptcy. Previous ministers had tried temporary expedients, and every effort had been made to avert the

(1) Such was the dissolution of the manners of the court, that no less than 500,000,000 francs of the public debt, or £20,000,000 sterling, had been incurred for expenses too ignominious to bear the light, or be even named in the public accounts; and the amount of expenditure of this description was ten times greater in the time of Louis XV. than it had been in that of Louis XIV. [Du Barri's Memoirs, i. et ii. Labaume, Hist. de la Rév. i. 281. Soulayrie, i. 715.]

(2) Chateaubriand, *Étude Hist.* i. 118. *Préface*.

(3) Roland, *Mém.* 112.

(4) Dupin, *Force Commerciale*, vol. i. 99. Roland, *Mém.* i. 112.

In 1824, out of 28,812 births, 18,591 only were the result of marriage; 9221 were illegitimate. [Dupin, i. 99.] The proportion of illegitimate births is now greater. In 1831, the legitimate births were 19,152; the illegitimate 10,378.—*Ann. du Bureau des Long.*

disaster; but the increasing expenses arising from the weight of the annual charge of the debt, rendered them all abortive (1).

The annual deficit was nearly 189,000,000 francs, above SEVEN MILLIONS sterling. No provision whatever was made for the liquidation or reduction of the debt. It is true a large proportion of the public burdens were for life annuities; but still the exhausted state of the treasury made some extraordinary measures necessary to satisfy even their passing demands. No other measure appeared practicable but the convocation of the States-General, from whom some relief, by the appropriation of part of the church-property, was expected by all parties; and the immediate cause of the Revolution was thus the improvidence and waste of preceding reigns (2).

**XIV.** While the minds of the people were in a state of ferment, arising from the concurrence of so many causes of dissatisfaction, the imprudent policy of the French government in engaging in the American War, lighted a spark which speedily set the train on fire. From jealousy of the English power, and a desire to increase the difficulties of that country in the contest with her colonies, Louis XVI took the dangerous step of aiding the insurgents. The consequence was that the French soldiers, who were sent over to support the cause of transatlantic freedom, imbibed the intoxicating ideas of patriotic resistance; language unknown in their own country grew familiar to their ears; from being parties in a strife in which the authority of legitimate government was resisted, they became zealous in the cause of independence; from proving victorious in a contest in which royal

(1) The revenue for the year 1789 amounted to 469,938,245 francs, or L.18,800,000; the debt to 6,500,000,000 francs, or L.244,000,000 sterling; and its annual charge to 259,000,000 francs, or L. 10,400,000 sterling. [État de la Dette Publique, 1790, p. 8. Young, i. 576, 577, 578, 979.] The annual expenses at this period amounted to 400,000,000 francs, or L. 16,000,000, exclusive of the charges of the debt; [Necker, de l'Administration des Finances. Lac. vi. 110.] so that while the annual expenses were . . . . . 400,000,000 francs or L. 16,000,000  
Interest of debt, . . . . . 259,000,000 or 10,400,000

While the annual income was . . . . . 470,000,000 or L. 26,400,000  
Annual deficit, . . . . . 189,000,000 or L. 7,600,000

The following Table will exhibit the steady progress of the deficit under the various administrations which preceded the Revolution:—

1784—NECKER, Minister.

Income . . . . .	236,833,000 francs or L. 9,300,000
Expenditure, . . . . .	283,162,000 or 11,600,000
Deficit, . . . . .	46,329,000 or L. 2,300,000

1786—CALONNE, Minister.

Income, . . . . .	474,047,649 francs or L. 18,800,000
Expenditure, . . . . .	89,184,995 or 23,600,000
Deficit, . . . . .	115,137,346 or L. 4,800,000

1787—CALONNE, Minister.

Income, . . . . .	474,048,239 francs or L. 19,000,000
Expenditure, . . . . .	599,135,795 or 24,000,000
Deficit, . . . . .	125,087,556 or L. 5,000,000

1788—BAKERS, Minister.

Income, . . . . .	472,415,549 francs or L. 17,200,000
Expenditure, . . . . .	527,255,089 or 21,100,000
Deficit, Ordinary, . . . . .	54,839,540 or 2,200,000
Extraordinary, Deficit, . . . . .	{ 70,502,387 or 2,900,000 29,293,585 or 1,000,000
Total, . . . . .	160,635,492 or L. 6,100,000

—See *Comptes Rendus par Calonne et Necker*, 1781, 1787, and 1788, 2 vols. 4to.

(2) Necker, de l'Administration des Finances, p. 87. Mign. i. 13, 23. Th. i. 22. Lac. vi. 110.

power was overthrown, they easily passed over to the admiration of republican institutions. The success of the Americans shook the foundations of despotism in the old world; and the throne of Louis tottered from his efforts to overthrow that of the English monarch. Not that the French King contemplated any such change, or was even convinced of the expedience of engaging in the contest. On the contrary, his secret correspondence proves that when he gave orders for the commencement of the war, he yielded against his better judgment to a passion in the public mind which appeared to him at least irresistible (1).

The early leaders of the Revolution, accordingly, were men who had signalized themselves in the cause of American independence. The Marquis La Fayette, and many other young noblemen of talent and consideration, returned from the other side of the Atlantic with a warm admiration of republican institutions, and an ardent desire to hold them up to the imitation of their countrymen. The friends of liberty were roused by the triumph of independence in the New World, and the flame rapidly spread among an enthusiastic people, who had so many more real causes of complaint than the patriots whose success was the subject of their exultation (2).

German discipline in army. XV. While so many causes were preparing the approach of a political convulsion, the injudicious measures of the government alienated the affection of the Army, and exposed them to the influence of the same causes which had shaken the allegiance of the other classes in the state. The abuses in the distribution of the pay and furnishings of the troops were so excessive, that the sums expended on the officers were as large as those on the private soldiers; while the impolitic introduction of the German discipline, with its useless formalities and severe punishments, excited the loudest complaints among the lower ranks of the army. These regulations awakened such profound indignation among the French soldiers, that they wept with grief at beholding their comrades punished by blows from the flat part of the sabre. While the nobles were enthusiastic in favour of English customs and American freedom, the officers of the army became extravagant imitators of the Prussian discipline. It is difficult to say which species of innovation proved most prejudicial to France. An imprudent and ill-timed regulation had been adopted in 1781, that noble birth was essential to obtaining a commission in the army: an hundred years of nobility was deemed a necessary qualification to an officer. This regulation irritated the Tiers-État, without securing the attachment of the army, and was so contrary to the opinion of the age, that it could not be carried into execution. To complete the misfortune, the French guards, from being permanently stationed in Paris, and in continual intercourse with the most depraved classes of the capital, were not only in a state of insubordination, but influenced by all the feelings and passions of the citizens; and they accordingly gave the first example of defection at the breaking out of the Revolution: a memorable instance to succeeding ages of the peril of intrusting the safety of the state to a body of troops, who, from being constantly in communication with the populace, became tainted by the contagion of their passions; and of preferring a well-dressed body of corrupted guards to the ruder aspect of faithful defenders (3).

(1) "How painful," said he, "to be obliged, for reasons of state, to sign orders and commence a great war, contrary alike to my wishes and my opinions."—*Corresp. conf. de Louis XVI.*, ii. 170, 187; and *Lab.* ii. 61.

(2) *Lac.* v. 341. *Lab.* ii. 57.

(3) *Mign.* i. 49, 118, 120. *Th.* i. 89. *Monthion*, 154. *De Staël*, i. 123, 153. *Ségur*, i. 119, 120, 271. *Lab.* ii. 44.



Excessive passion for innovation. XVI. The circumstances which have now been mentioned, without doubt contributed to the formation of that discontent which formed the predisposing cause of the Revolution. But the exciting cause, as physicians would say, the immediate source of the convulsion, was the SPIRIT OF INNOVATION, which like a malady, overspread France at that crisis, precipitated all classes into a passion for changes, of which they were far from perceiving the ultimate effects, and in the end induced evils far greater than those they were intended to remove.

There is no unmixed good in human affairs: the best principles, if pushed to excess, degenerate into fatal vices. Generosity is nearly allied to extravagance—charity itself may lead to ruin—the sternness of justice is but one step removed from the severity of oppression. It is the same in the political world: the tranquillity of despotism resembles the stagnation of the Dead Sea; the fever of innovation, the tempests of the ocean. It would seem as if, at particular periods, from causes inscrutable to human wisdom, an universal frenzy seizes mankind; reason, experience, prudence, are alike blinded; and the very classes who are to perish in the storm, are the first to raise its fury.

France exhibited a striking proof of the truth of this observation, for a number of years preceding the Revolution. During the reign of Louis XV no one thought of a convulsion, though it was rapidly approaching, and the most ardent in the cause of innovation were those whose fortunes were about to perish from its effects. The young nobles applauded the writings of Raynal, Voltaire, and Rousseau, and repeated all the arguments against their exclusive privileges and the feudal system, without ever suspecting that they would be the first victims of such opinions. Long before the Tiers-État had adopted them, the seeds of liberty had spread widely among the French nobles; but the approaches of the spirit of innovation were so disguised under the colours of philanthropy, that none perceived its consequences. "In truth," says Ségur, "who could have anticipated the terrible flood of passions and crimes which was about to be let loose on the world, at a time when all writings, all thoughts, all actions, seemed to have but one end, the extirpation of abuses, the propagation of virtue, the relief of the people, the establishment of freedom? It is thus that the most terrible convulsions are ushered into the world; the night is serene, the sunset fair, which precedes the fury of the tornado (1)."

The passion for innovation increasing during the latter years of the reign of Louis XV, became irresistible under the succeeding monarch. It seized all classes, embraced all subjects, overwhelmed all understandings. The extravagant imitation of English customs and manners, called the *Anglomania*, was more than a mere foolery of fashion; it was the effort of a disposition disquieted and dissatisfied with itself, and proceeded from a secret desire to imitate the free institutions of a country, whose extravagances were so much the object of admiration (2).

But the American war was the great change which blew into a flame the embers of innovation. The admiration of England immediately was transferred to its enemies; the ancient rivalry of Britain combined with the rising passion for republican institutions;—it literally forced the government to take a part in the contest. Such was the universal enthusiasm which seized upon the nation at its commencement, that nobles of the highest rank, princes, dukes, and marquises, solicited with impatient zeal commissions in the regiments destined to aid the insurgents. It was hard to say whether the

(1) Ségur, i. 21, 38, 40, 76, 79, 84. Lab. i. 3.

(2) Ségur, i. 24, 25, 268. Lab. ii. 3, 4.

government, the nobles, or the commons, were most zealous in their support. Rousseau foresaw in this universal passion the commencement of a new era in human affairs, the era of revolutions; while the governments of France, Spain, and Russia, considered it only as the means of humbling the naval ascendancy of England (1).

The passion for republican institutions increased with the successes of the American war, and at length rose to such a height as to infect even the courtiers of the palace. Thunders of applause shook the theatre of Versailles at the celebrated lines of Voltaire,—

“ Je suis fils de Brutus, et je porte en mon cœur  
La liberté gravée et les rois en horreur.”

It was easy to see, from the passion for republican institutions which seized even upon the highest classes, that the era of revolution was not to be confined to the New World. The philosophers of France used every method of flattery to bring over the young nobles to their side; and the profession of liberal opinions became as indispensable a passport to the saloons of fashion as to the favour of the people. Even in foreign courts the same sentiments were rapidly gaining ground, from the extreme interest taken in the American contest; and Ségur found at St.-Petersburg his decoration of the republican order of Cincinnatus more an object of envy than any which he had obtained from the European monarchs. Emperors, kings, and nobles, seemed at that period to have combined with a view to establish a new order of things, from the extravagant eulogiums they pronounced on philosophers and liberal opinions; and it was only after having themselves erected the fabric that they strove to pull it down,—forgetting that the human mind, like time, is always advancing, and never recedes. They were astonished when they found that men had discernment enough to apply to them the principles they had inculcated in regard to others. La Fayette was hailed as a hero, a divinity, so long as he supported the cause of transatlantic independence; but he was stigmatized as a rebel, when he endeavoured to maintain the same principles in support of European freedom (2).

1760 to 1778. So many causes of disaffection did not come all at once into action; many of them had been long in operation. The increasing intelligence and freer spirit of the age successively made them the objects of popular complaint. During the whole reign of Louis XV, the discontents of the people were gradually increasing, and it was already foreseen that the reign of his successor would be one of anxiety and trouble. “I have had great difficulty,” said Louis XV, “in extricating myself from the quarrels with the parliaments during my whole reign; but let my grandson take care of them, for it is more than probable they will endanger his crown.” In truth, during the latter part of the eighteenth century, and particularly subsequent to the peace of 1763, a growing discontent constantly prevailed in the nation; headed, in the first instance, by a portion of the noblesse, who were impelled by the force of public opinion or dazzled by the desire of popular applause, and augmented latterly by the numberless faults of the government and the corrupt effeminacy of the court (3).

Character of Louis XVI. Of all the monarchs who ever sat upon the French throne, Louis XVI was the one least calculated to provoke, and least fitted to subdue,

(1) Ségur, i. 100, 149, 189. Lab. ii. 4, 5.  
(2) Lab. ii. 2, 3. Ségur, i. 189, 252, 255; ii. 46;  
iii. 38, 50.

(3) De Staël, i. 43.

a revolution. Firm in principle, pure in morals, humane in feeling, beneficent in intention, he possessed all the qualities calculated to adorn a pacific throne, or which are amiable and estimable in private life; but he had neither the genius to prevent, nor the firmness to resist a revolution. Many of his qualities were calculated to have allayed the public discontents; none to have stifled them. The people were tired of the arbitrary powers of their monarch, and he was disposed to abandon them;—they were provoked at the expensive corruptions of the court, and he was both innocent in his manners and unexpensive in his habits;—they demanded reformation in the administration of affairs, and he placed his chief glory in yielding to the public voice. Such was his anxiety to outstrip the general desire for reforms, that he caused a box to be placed at the gate of his palace, to receive suggestions from all persons who might concur in the same views. But, in accomplishing great changes in society, it is not only necessary to concede to one party, but to restrain their violence and control another; and the difficult task awaited the French monarch, of either compelling the nation to submit to abuses, or the aristocracy to agree to innovation. To accomplish either of these objects required more firmness and decision of character than he possessed. *Irresolution* was his great defect; and hence, in difficult periods, his conduct vacillated between the nobility and the people, and led both parties to abandon his interests: the first, because they distrusted his constancy—the last, because they were doubtful of his sincerity. His reign, from his accession to the throne down to the meeting of the States-General, was nothing but a series of ameliorations, without calming the public effervescence; of concessions, which only added to the ambition of the people. He had the misfortune to wish sincerely for the public good, without possessing the firmness requisite to secure it; and with truth it may be said, that reforms were more fatal to him than the continuance of abuses would have been to another sovereign (1).

Ministry of  
Maurepas.

The choice which he made, on his accession to the throne, of Maurepas for prime minister, was in every point of view prejudicial to his reign. This old man, though not destitute of good qualities, was in no respect adapted for the duties of a minister in arduous times. He accustomed the King to half measures and a system of temporization, and contributed early to fix that character of irresolution upon his proceedings, which was too much the defect of his own disposition. Having suffered a banishment of nearly twenty years from court, in consequence of some satirical verses on Madame de Pompadour, he returned to power with no other principle but that of maintaining his ascendancy. Frivolous in all his ideas of government, he neither formed his opinions of men by their conduct, nor of measures by their utility, but of both by their tendency to uphold his influence at court. His ideas were all half a century back; he was an old courtier of Versailles, but not a minister of France. The King intrusted him with the nomination of the ministry; and the choice which he made was determined less by any fixed plan, than the exigencies or inclination of the moment (2).

Of Turgot,  
Necker, and  
Malesherbes.

Turgot, Malesherbes, and Necker, were successively called, at the King's desire, into the administration, and intrusted with the departments for which they were peculiarly qualified by their previous habits. The increasing weight of public opinion rendered it evident that some reforms were necessary, and these great men were selected to

(1) Mig. i. 12, 13. Thiers, i. 6, 8. Lab. ii. 4, 5.

(2) Thiers. Odoardo, i. 23, 24. Lab. ii. 8, 9. Boissy d'Anglas, ii. 37.

give some degree of consistency to the plans of amelioration. Malesherbes, descended from an eminent legal family, had inherited the virtues without the prejudices of his ancestors. His dispositions were as virtuous as his mind was free; oppression appeared to him as illegal as it was impolitic. His first condition on entering into the office of Minister of the Interior was, that the King should engage to sign no *lettre de cachet* but what he presented to him. He was a warm partisan of the liberty of the press, easy of access, tolerant and retiring in his habits, little qualified to shine at court, but eminently to inspire wisdom into the cabinet. He wished not to *extend* but to *restore* the rights of the nation—to concede to the accused the liberty of being defended by counsel—to the Protestants, perfect freedom of conscience—to all, personal freedom. With these views, he supported the abolition of torture, the re-enactment of the Edict of Nantes, the suppression of *lettres de cachet*, and the removal of the censorship on the press. Turgot, endowed with greater powers and a firmer character, of whom Malesherbes said, “He has the head of Bacon and the heart of L’Hôpital,” aimed at still more extensive reforms. Profoundly versed in political science and every species of knowledge; esteemed equally for his great acquirements and his irreproachable manners; ardent in the pursuit of speculative improvement, and yet capable, as his administration of the province of Limousin demonstrated, of the most minute attention to practical matters, he was better fitted than any other man in existence, by salutary and cautious reforms, to have prevented the Revolution. He incessantly laboured to effect that which the Revolution ultimately completed, the suppression of every species of servitude and exclusive privilege. He proposed to free the labours of the peasantry from the burden of the *corvée*, internal communication from the barriers of the provinces, commerce from the duties of the interior; to subject all classes alike to the burden of the public taxes; accustom the people gradually, by the means of provincial parliaments, to the rights of freemen, and so prepare the way for the re-establishment of the States-General (1).

Necker, a Genevese by birth, and a banker by profession, was called to the administration of the finances, from his high credit and acknowledged skill in money transactions. He was appointed to the ministry in order to exert his talents in procuring money for the court, and extricating the finances from their embarrassment; but, being strongly attached to the principles of freedom, he endeavoured to make the difficulties of the government the means of emancipating the people. His system was to face boldly the public accounts, to make no secret to the world of the excess of the expenditure above the receipts, and to reduce them ultimately to a level by a rigid system of economy. He proposed to meet the public exigencies in ordinary periods by taxation, in extraordinary by loans; to familiarize the people to the former, by obtaining the consent of the provincial parliaments, and gain them over to the latter, by giving perfect publicity to the public accounts. Thus both parts of his system were favourable to the progress of freedom; the taxes by leading to the States-General, and the loans by compelling a publication of the accounts; the former by establishing a legal organ for popular influence, the latter by opening a channel for public opinion. His private character was unexceptionable. Possessed of immense wealth, he made a noble use of it; liberal, without either pride or prodigality, he would have been a perfect private citizen, had it not been for a vein of ostentation and a secret vanity, which afterwards, by making him

(1) *Mlg.* t. 14. *Lac.* v. 28. *Lab.* ii. 14, 15, 27.

sacrifice every thing to his love of popularity, brought unheard-of disasters on the monarchy (1).

Opposed by the nobles. But great as were the talents, sincere the intentions, unbending the probity, of these eminent men, they were unable to carry into effect the reforms which they so anxiously strove to introduce. So many of the influential classes of society were interested in the preservation of the abuses—so many of the nobility exerted their influence to procure the dismissal of ministers who proposed their abolition—the public voice was as yet so feebly heard within the precincts of the palace, that the King was unable to maintain them. Turgot had excited the jealousy of the courtiers by his reforms, of the parliaments by the abolition of the *corvées*, of Maurepas by his ascendant over the monarch. Beset on all sides, Louis, against his better judgment, abandoned that virtuous minister, observing at the same time, that “Turgot, and he alone, loved the people.” Necker shortly after experienced the same fate. His economical plans had excited alarm among the courtiers; and the provincial assemblies had incurred the jealousy of the parliaments, who wished to monopolize the consequence arising from resistance to the court. Maurepas himself soon afterwards died, and the King, fatally for himself, fell under the influence of different counsels (2).

The Queen, Marie Antoinette. The Queen, Marie Antoinette, supplied the place of prime minister to the King, and succeeded to all the ascendancy of her aged predecessor over his mind. Young, beautiful, high-spirited, and ambitious, she early acquired a lead at court which continued down to the overthrow of the throne. Her character was better suited for adversity than prosperity; in the arduous trials of her later years she evinced a courage and magnanimity worthy of the daughter of Maria-Theresa, but in the early and prosperous period of her reign she mingled the love of power with the spirit of gaiety, and instead of firmly preparing for the storms which were approaching, made too much use of her influence to support men who were undermining alike her own happiness and the stability of the throne. She had little education, read hardly any thing but novels and romances, and had a fixed aversion, during her prosperous days, to every species of business or serious employment. Maurepas, who had acquired in early life an extreme distrust of courtier ministers, had always the merit at least of appointing popular statesmen; and though he had not the firmness to support them, when assailed by the privileged classes, their influence was sufficient to prevent the increase of evil. But after his death the courtier administration made no attempt to check the progress of abuses. Many real grievances, such as the *corvées* and monopolies, which had been abolished, were restored; and the people, perceiving that the reforms meditated by their predecessors were abandoned, gave full vent to their feelings of discontent. From that moment the Revolution became inevitable: the return to abuses, after the taste for reforms has been introduced, is, in an age of intelligence, insupportable (3).

An unfortunate occurrence took place at this time, which, though trivial in itself, is well worthy of consideration, from the important effect which it had in swelling the tide of public discontent which was setting in so strongly against the throne. A diamond necklace of immense value, belonging to a jeweller of Paris, had been long desired by the Queen, though she had had the virtue to resist it when the King wished to make her a present of it on the birth of the Dauphin. On the 15th August, 1785, a letter was put into the King's hands, written by the Cardinal de Rohan, grand almoner, to the

(1) Mig. i. 16. Lac. v. 25, 52. Lab. ii. 23.

(3) Th. i. 7. Lab. ii. 42, 43, 106. Lac. v. 25

(2) Mig. i. 16. Th. i. 7. Lac. v. 8. Lab. ii. 24. Camp. i. 40, 41.

owner, in which he stated, falsely as it afterwards appeared, that it had been sent to her Majesty. The cardinal was in consequence arrested, and the affair gave rise to a trial, which acquired extraordinary publicity, and terminated in the punishment of Madame de Lamotte, the principal delinquent in the affair. This intrigue revived all the old stories, which the economy of recent years had somewhat lulled into oblivion, of the prodigality and extravagance of the court; and the Abbé TALLEYRAND PÉRIGORD, then a young man, but whose penetration nothing could escape, early discerned its importance. "Attend narrowly," he said, "to that miserable affair of the necklace; I should be nowise surprised if it overturned the throne (1)."

Vergennes, minister. Vergennes was the minister selected by the court to revert to the old system, and he appointed Calonne minister of finance. Bold, inconsiderate, and enterprising, this statesman was in every respect the reverse of the cautious Genevese. Gifted with extraordinary powers of application, brilliant in conversation, fertile in resources, he was both qualified to form plans adapted to the emergency of the moment, and to give them an air of plausibility to the volatile and superficial. His system was to encourage industry by expenditure, to stifle discontent by prodigality: the parsimony of Necker had ruined him with the courtiers; the extravagance of Calonne brought him into obloquy with the nation. But how clearly soever the people, who paid his expenses, perceived the delusive nature of his measures, the courtiers, who profited by them, vehemently supported him. The Queen was captivated by the splendour of his fêtes (2); the nobles by the magnitude of his pensions; even the capitalists were deceived by the exactness with which he discharged the public engagements, and supposed his resources inexhaustible because his disposition to borrow appeared so. They did not perceive; what is generally the case with profuse statesmen, that his regularity in discharging old debts arose from the incessant contracting of new ones; and that the ultimate inability of the state to meet its engagements, was owing to the very same causes which, for a limited period, supported its credit. He continued the system of loans after the conclusion of the American war, and at length exhausted the credit which the judicious measures of Necker had procured for the government. In these circumstances it became necessary to have recourse to taxes; and for this purpose the *Notables*, or principal nobility of the kingdom, were convened; but a minister who had rested his popularity on what he gave, soon found his influence gone when he came to ask (3).

Finances. Composed entirely of the privileged classes, who had been accustomed to derive emolument from, not make sacrifices to the court, the *Notables* showed themselves little disposed to support the public exigencies. The state of the finances excited the utmost alarm. It appeared that since the retreat of Necker in 1781, the government had borrowed 1,646,000,000 francs; or L.64,000,000 sterling, and that the annual deficit of the revenue below the expenditure was at least 140,000,000 francs, or L.5,600,000 (4). This discovery was the signal of the ruin of Calonne. The consequences of his extravagance came at once upon his head, and he fell regretted by none but the creatures of his bounty.

Joining rashness to ignorance, the Archbishop of Toulouse used these remarkable expressions in dismissing the *Notables*, which subsequent events

(1) Georgel, ii. 209. Lab. ii. 139.

(2) To all the requests of the Queen he answered, — "If what your Majesty asks is possible, the thing is done; if it is impossible, it will be done." As in the days of Louis XIV, he thought the dignity of

France depended entirely on the splendour of the court. — WILKINSON, *Memoirs*, i. 301.

(3) Lab. ii. 127. Mig. i. 18. De Staël, i. 110, 111, 113. Tb. i. 9, 10.

(4) Thiers, i. 10. De Staël, i. 113. *Comptes rend.* in 1788. Lab. ii. 156, 164.

rendered so important and fatal in their operation. "Since one interest alone ought to animate the three orders of the state, each ought in the States-General to have an equal number of representatives. The two first wish to be united: by that means the Tiers-État, secured in another assembly of *an equal number of voices as the clergy and nobles taken together*, need fear no dereliction of its interests. It is just, moreover, that that part of his Majesty's subjects, so numerous, so interesting, so worthy of protection, should acquire, at least by the number of its votes, a counterpoise to the advantages which birth and wealth must necessarily give to the other orders. In conformity with this view, his Majesty will direct that henceforth the States-General *shall vote, not by orders, in separate houses, but by head*." Such were the projects openly announced by the first minister of the crown. While these perilous projects were dispersed through the nation with the dissolution of the Notables, Malesherbes, who had been restored to the ministry, was labouring to convince the cabinet that the only secure basis for a national representation was property, the true principle of representative governments, and which alone can render them either durable in their existence or beneficial in their effects, but which was then overlooked in the fervour of innovation, and is even at this day far from being so generally understood as its paramount importance deserves (1).

Succeeded  
by Arch-  
bishop of  
Toulouse.

Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, the antagonist of Calonne in the assembly of Notables, succeeded him in the administration.

But it was soon found that he had neither firmness enough to manage the assembly, nor ability adequate to the administration of the finances. He had activity without firmness, rashness without perseverance. He won the Queen by his talent for conversation and the brilliant style of his repartees, but he had none of the solid acquirements essential to a minister in troubled times. His character was a mixture of scepticism and Jesuitism: without having lost any of the casuistry of the schools, he had, to the scandal of the church, thrown himself into the arms of the philosophers and atheists of the day. Nor were his talents or conduct more considerable. Bold before the commencement of his plans, but feeble in their execution, he lost every thing from his irresolution, his want of consideration, and his vacillation of conduct (2).

Assembly of  
Notables.

The assembly of Notables proved both parsimonious and refractory. They passed resolutions approving of the provincial assemblies of M. Necker, fixing certain rules for the commerce of corn, the suppression of the corvées, and then dissolved. The members carried with them to every part of France the information they had received as to the embarrassment of the finances, the faults of the ministers, and the prodigality of the court. A spirit of resistance to the government spread universally through the country; the magistrates and parliaments demanded openly a statement of the receipts and expenditure; and many officers of the army declared that they would not obey the orders of the King, if required to act against the supporters of the people. The Revolution commenced with the parliaments and privileged classes; they little foresaw the tremendous power of the torrent they were letting in upon the country. All the world was felicitating the King on the convocation of the Notables, as a sovereign remedy for all the evils of the state. Old Marshal de Ségur was of an opposite opinion. "Tous les esprits," said he to Louis, "sont en fermentation; les Notables pourraient

(1) Boissy d'Anglas, ii. 276. Weber, i. 176, Lab.

(2) Lac. v. 123. De Staël, i. 122. Mig. i. 19. Lab. ii. 169. Th. i. 12. Soularie, vi. 36.

n'être que la graine des *États-Généraux*. Et qui pourrait aujourd'hui en calculer les résultats (1)?"

The fermentation, however, which these hints, thrown out by such high authority, produced over the whole kingdom, soon became unbounded. In the parliaments, in particular, the effervescence was extreme. "You ask," said the Abbé Sabatier, counsellor of parliament, to the Parliament of Paris, "an account of the receipts and expenditure of government ('Des États;') you are mistaken in your object, it is the STATES-GENERAL ('Des États-Généraux') which you require." This witty expression, thrown in at a period of uncommon excitement, powerfully contributed to the Revolution, by giving a definite and fixed object to the wishes of the people. The person who used it was sent to prison, but that only rendered the public enthusiasm the greater, and an occasion soon occurred which brought matters to a crisis (2).

New taxes  
proposed.

Brienne was afterwards under the necessity, from the exhausted state of the treasury, of proposing the imposition of two new taxes, one on stamps, another on territorial possessions. But the Parliament of Paris, animated by the support of the public, and encouraged in their resistance by the almost unanimous voice of the nation, refused to register them; a solemnity indispensable by the French law to the legality of the impost. The resistance of the parliaments was peculiarly formidable from their being composed of persons connected by birth or alliance with the greatest families in the kingdom. The King immediately banished them to Troyes, whence, after some time, they were brought back, on condition that the tax should be registered. But this was only the commencement of the strife. The increasing wants of the crown rendered it indispensable that several new imposts should be registered, and loans to the amount of 440,000,000 francs, or L.17,400,000 sterling, were dependent on their success. The Parliament of Paris refused to register them. Upon this the King had recourse to a bed of justice, and registered the edict of his own authority; proclaiming, at the same time, to pacify the public, the restitution of their rights to the Protestants, the annual publication of the public accounts, and the convocation of the States-General in five years (3).

Contests  
with the  
parliaments.

But the public mind was now too much agitated to be satisfied with these concessions. The parliament continued its opposition, and still refused to register the edict. Measures of severity were again resorted to; some of its members, including the Duke of Orleans, immediately exiled. The parliament, upon this, published an arrêt, protesting against lettres de cachet, and demanding the recall of its members; the arrêt was annulled by the King, and confirmed by the parliament. In this contest the Parliament of Paris were supported by all the magistracy of France. The movement became universal, the passion for freedom indescribable. All classes joined in the general enthusiasm; many of the nobles, most of the clergy, united in demanding the States-General. Placing itself at the head of the national movement, the Parliament of Paris sacrificed its own powers to the nation, and solemnly declared that it had no right to register taxes, and protesting against arbitrary imprisonments, demanded a regular convocation of the same national assembly. This courageous act was followed by a decree declaring its members immovable, and all acts illegal, of those who should usurp its place. The King arrested and banished Fretau and Sabatier to the Isles of Hyères, and the Duke of Orleans to Villers-Coterets (4). But this imprudent

(1) Ségur, iii. 70. Mig. i. 20. De Staël, i. 123.

Lab. ii. 175.

(2) De Staël, i. 123, 124. Mig. 20. Th. i. 14.

(3) Mig. i. 20. De Staël, i. 124. Th. i. 15. Lab.

ii. 480, 190, 220.

(4) Mig. i. 21. Th. i. 16, 18. Lab. ii. 180, 206.

215. De Staël, 124, 125.



measure had no tendency to subdue the ferment of the nation. The revolution was now become inevitable; the concurring voice of all classes loudly demanded the National Estates.

Coup d'État  
of Brienne,  
May 5,  
1788.

Brienne, perceiving that the opposition of the parliament was systematic, and was renewed at every successive demand of a subsidy, or of the sanctioning of a loan, resolved to adopt a general measure, calculated to extinguish all resistance in future. With this view, he resolved to strip the body of all but its judicial functions, and assumed Lamoignon, an intrepid man, to execute the difficult task. He executed the attempt with skill, but the court were mistaken in their calculation of the resistance they were to experience. A new organization of the parliaments was attempted. In one day all the magistracy of France were exiled to make way for the new establishment. The keeper of the seals deprived the parliament of Paris of its political powers, to vest them in a *Cour plénière* formed of the court party, and he placed its judiciary functions in the hands of the bailliages. The Parliament of Paris boldly protested against its dissolution; the King replied by arresting two of its members, d'Épremesnil and Goislard, in the middle of the Assembly; and three days afterwards, registered the edicts in a bed of justice. When the halberdiers entered the hall, no one would point out the objects of their search. "We are all d'Épremesnil," said they from all sides; and it was the prisoners alone who delivered themselves up to the officers. But public opinion was too strong for so violent a step. The court of Châtelet protested against the usurpation of the crown. Troubles broke out at the same time in Dauphiny, Bretagne, Provence, Flanders, Languedoc, and Bearn. The ministry, instead of the organized resistance of the parliament, found themselves encountered by a more vehement and formidable opposition from the people. It was headed by the higher classes;—the noblesse, the commons, the provincial assemblies, and the clergy, joined in the demand. Pressed by the necessitous state of the exchequer, Brienne convoked an extraordinary assembly of the clergy; but the first thing they did was to vote an address to the King, demanding the abolition of the *Cour plénière*, and the immediate convocation of the States-General, as the only means of re-establishing the public credit, and terminating the distressing conflicts of royal and judicial authority (1).

Agrees to  
convoke the  
States-General.

Driven to extremities, Brienne, as a last resource, agreed to convoke the States-General. But this resolution proved his ruin. He had been called to the helm of affairs to remedy the distresses of the government, he had succeeded only in plunging them deeper into difficulties: he found the court involved only in pecuniary embarrassments, he left it engaged in the still more serious contests of power. He rendered inevitable, what was deemed by the court the worst possible method of avoiding the public difficulties, the convocation of the States-General (2). The immediate cause of his ruin was the suspension of the payment of the public rentes, which amounted to a declaration of national bankruptcy (3). His administration has been much decried, because, during its subsistence, the public calamities commenced; but, if he had possessed the ability of Sully, or the sagacity of Richelieu, the result would have been the same. The period had arrived when the public exigencies absolutely required a supply of money, and when it could be procured only by redressing the public grievances (4).

(1) Soulas, vi. 205, 212. Lab. ii. 227, 264.  
Mig. i. 22. De Staël, i. 225. Th. i. 22, 23.

(2) Th. i. 23.

(3) De Staël, i. 127. Th. i. 24.

(4) De Staël, i. 125, 126.

The court, assailed in so many quarters, took the bold resolution of convoking the States-General, in the hope that the Tiers-État would defend the throne against the legal, as their ancestors had against the feudal aristocracy. Passing suddenly from one extreme to another, they not only pressed the convocation of the Estates, and prescribed the mode of their assembly, but invited the learned bodies and popular writers to give their advice on the July 17, 1788. subject; and at the same time that the clergy declared in a body that it was necessary to accelerate the period of its meeting, the King fixed their convocation at an earlier date than any one anticipated (1).

The most vehement fermentation instantly seized the public mind; social regeneration became the order of the day; the ardent and philanthropic were seduced by the brilliant prospects of unbounded felicity which appeared to be opening upon the nation, the selfish entranced by the hope of individual elevation in the midst of the general confusion. Thousands of political pamphlets inundated the country; politics were discussed in every society; an universal enthusiasm seized the nation. But though all classes were unanimous in desiring the convocation of the States-General, and the commencement of the public reforms, they differed widely in the measures which they deemed likely to advance the public welfare, and already were to be seen the seeds of those divisions which afterwards deluged the monarchy with blood. The higher classes of the noblesse, and all the prelates, desired the maintenance of the separation of the three orders, and the preservation of their exclusive privileges; the philosophic party, from whom the Girondists afterwards sprung, considered the federal republics of America as a model of government; while the few cautious observers, whom the general whirl had left in the nation, in vain suggested, that, as they were about to embark on the dark and unknown sea of innovation, the British constitution was the only haven in which they could hope to find a secure asylum (2).

In consequence of this change in the administration and royal designs, Aug. 1788. the convocation of the Estates was fixed, in August, 1788, for the 1st May, 1789. Necker was recalled, the parliament re-established, the *Cour plénière* abolished, the provinces satisfied, and every thing prepared for the election of the members of the States-General (3).

This great victory had been gained by the united efforts of all classes; the nobles had supported the Tiers-État, and the clergy had been almost unanimous on the same side; but, as usual on such occasions, divisions were consequent on success. The separate interests of the different bodies who had combined in the struggle, appeared when it was over. Each of the three bodies had entertained different views in demanding the States-General. The parliaments had hoped to rule them as in their last assemblage in 1614; the nobles expected, by the convocation of this body, to regain their lost influence; the Tiers-État to rise into political importance. These discordant views immediately were supported by their respective adherents, and divisions broke out between the three Estates (4).

Division of the popular party. The commons vehemently maintained that the vast increase in the numbers and consideration of their body since the last assemblage of the Estates in 1614, rendered it indispensable that a great addition should be made to the number of their representatives; that many places, formerly of no moment, had risen into opulence and importance within the last two centuries, who were wholly without representatives; that no nation

(1) Th. i. 23 Lab. ii. 266, 267.

(2) Lab. ii. 267, 268.

(3) Mig. i. 24. Th. i. 23.

(4) De Staël, i. 126, Mig. i. 21. Th. i. 27.

nal assembly could rest on a secure basis, which was thus rested only on a partial representation; that the light of the age was adverse to the maintenance of feudal distinctions, and that the only way to prevent a revolution was to concede in time the just demands of the people. On the other hand, the Parliament of Paris, the nobles, and privileged classes, alleged, that the only way to prevent innovation was to adhere to the practice of the constitution; that no human wisdom could foresee the effect of any considerable addition to the representatives of the people; and that, if such a deviation from established usage could ever be expedient, the last time when it should be attempted was in a moment of great public excitement, when the object of political wisdom should be to moderate rather than increase the ambition of the lower orders (1).

A pamphlet published at this period, by the Abbé Sièyes, under the title, "Qu'est-ce que le Tiers-État?" had a powerful influence on the future destinies of France. "The Tiers-État," said he, "is the French nation, *minus* the noblesse and the clergy." Public opinion ran daily more strongly in favour of the commons; extravagant expectations began to be formed; visionary schemes to be published, and that general unhinging of opinions took place which is the surest prelude of a revolution. Brienne, by order of the King, issued an invitation to all the writers of France to publish their sentiments on the formation of the approaching States-General; the country was immediately deluged with pamphlets, many written with great talent, others indulging in the most chimerical projects (2). Every thing tended to increase the public effervescence, and to disqualify men from forming a rational judgment on public affairs.

Necker's  
return. Upon Necker's return to the administration, he found only 250,000 francs, or 11,000*l.*, in the royal treasury. On the following day he received numerous tenders of loans, and the public funds rose at once 30 per cent. The public creditors were then alive only to the danger of national bankruptcy which arose from the perfidy or extravagance of kings; they had yet to learn the far more imminent peril which springs from the violence and vacillation of the people. He immediately recalled all persons exiled for political offences, and strove to the utmost to assuage individual distress. But it was too late. When he received the intimation of his recall, his first words were, "Ah! would that I could recall the fifteen months of the Archbishop of Toulouse!" In truth, during those eventful years, the period of safe concession was gone by; every point now abandoned was adding fuel to the flame (3).

Necker  
doubles the  
Tiers-État. Necker, yielding to the force of democratic ambition, had secretly resolved to *double* the numbers of the Tiers-État in the approaching assembly; but, in order to feel his way with the public, and throw the responsibility of so great a change off himself, he convoked the Notables of the kingdom; but they rejected the proposal. The danger, on the eve of a political crisis, of adding so much suddenly to the power of the ambitious commons was distinctly perceived. One bureau alone, headed by Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII, reported that it should be conceded (4). Finding that the object could not be gained in this way, and apprehensive, it is said, that if the people were irritated by its refusal, they would return even a greater number of deputies to the assembly, he prevailed on the King's council to

(1) Mig. i. 25. Th. i. 27, 28. De Staël, i. 125.

(2) Lab. ii. 312. De Staël, i. 169, 170.

(3) De Staël, i. 157, 159.

(4) This resolution was carried by the single

casting-vote of that prince. When it was reported to Louis XVI, he immediately said, "Let them add mine, I give it willingly."—LABAUME, ii. 223.

authorize it. At the same time, he procured the admission of the *curés* into the body of the clergy—a measure which gave as great an accession to the popular party in their order (1).

**Elections.** The elections soon after commenced, and, as might have been expected, almost all terminated in favour of the popular party. They were carelessly conducted by the constituted authorities; the crown made no attempt to influence the returns; the importance of attending to the quality of those who exercised the elective franchise was not understood; and, after a few days, every person decently dressed was allowed to vote without any questions being asked:—upwards of three millions of electors concurred in the formation of the Assembly. The parliaments had little influence in the choice of the deputies, the court none; the noblesse chose a few popular persons of their rank, but the great bulk of their representatives were firmly attached to the interest of their order, and as hostile to the *Tiers-État* as to the oligarchy of great families who composed the court. The clergy named deputies attached to the cause of freedom, and the bishops those likely to uphold the hierarchy. Finally, the *Tiers-État* chose a numerous body of representatives, firm in their attachment to liberty, and ardently desirous of extending the influence of their order (2).

Every thing contributed at this period to swell the torrent of popular enthusiasm. The minds of men, strongly agitated by the idea of an approaching revolution, were in a continual ferment; the parliaments, nobles, and dignified clergy, who had headed the movement, already saw themselves assailed by the arms which they had given to the people (3). In Brittany, the nobles, indignant at the duplication of the *Tiers-État*, against which they had strongly protested, withdrew from the elections, and named no deputies to the assembly; an imprudent defection, attended with fatal effects to the cause of order in after times (4). Even the elements contributed to swell the public discontent, and seemed to have declared war on the falling monarchy. A dreadful storm of hail, in July, 1788, laid waste the provinces, and produced such a diminution in the harvest, as threatened all the horrors of famine; while the severity of the succeeding winter exceeded any thing that had been experienced since that which followed the disasters of Louis XIV. The charity of Fénelon, which immortalized that disastrous epoch, was now equalled by the humane beneficence of the clergy of Paris; but all their efforts could not keep pace with the immense mass of indigence, which was swelled by the confluence of dissolute and abandoned characters from every part of France. These wretches assembled round the throne, like the sea-birds round the wreck, which are the harbingers of death to the sinking mariner, and already appeared in fearful numbers in the streets on occasion of the slightest tumult.

(1) De Staël, i. 170, 171. Lab. ii. 325-6. Mig. i. 25. Th. i. 29. Dec. 27, 1788.

Nothing can be more instructive than to review the arguments by which this able and good, but mistaken man, supported this great and decisive addition to the popular influence. He rested his opinion on the unanimity expressed on this point in all the petitions to the King from the towns and municipalities of the kingdom, on the general concurrence of the writers who had published their opinions, and on the recent decisions of the division of the parliaments—"All hope," said he, "of a successful issue would be lost, if it were made to depend on establishing harmony between three orders essentially at variance in their principles and interest. To put an end to the injustice of pecuniary privileges, and maintain a proper equilibrium between the *Tiers-État* and the other orders, we must

give it a double representation; without that, there would always be a majority of two to one against them: whereas, when compelled to look to common interests, they will only adopt the laws which impose the least burden upon the community, and will thus compel the *Tiers-État* to accept the impost which at present they deem most onerous. We ascribe too much importance to this last order. The *Tiers-État*, by their nature and their occupations, must ever be strangers to political passions. Their intelligence and goodness of disposition are a sufficient guarantee against all the apprehensions at present entertained of their excesses."—NECRES, *Mémoires*, i. 175, 180, and LABAUME, ii. 326, 327.

(2) Th. i. 26. Dumont, 57.

(3) Th. i. 36.

(4) Hb. Lac. vii. 6, 7.

They were all in a state of destitution, and for the most part owed their life to the charity of the ecclesiastics, whom they afterwards massacred in cold blood in the prison of Carmes (1).

Effect of  
these con-  
cessions.

The effect of these measures of M. Necker is thus described by the man of all others who gained most by the Revolution, Napoleon Bonaparte. "The concessions of Necker, were the work of a man ignorant of the first principles of the government of mankind. It was he who overturned the monarchy, and brought Louis XVI to the scaffold. Marat, Danton, Robespierre himself, did less mischief to France; he brought on the Revolution, which they consummated. Such reformers as M. Necker do incredible mischief. The thoughtful read their works; the populace are carried away by them; the public happiness is in every mouth; and soon after, the people find themselves without bread; they revolt, and society is overturned. Necker was the author of all the evils which desolated France during the revolution; all the blood that was shed rests on his head (2)."

! Making every allowance for the despotic feelings which so strongly characterised the French Emperor, it is impossible to deny that there is much truth in these observations. Admitting that a struggle was inevitable, the question remains, Was it expedient to make so extraordinary an addition to the powers of the people at such a crisis; to double the number of the popular representatives on the eve of a conflict? The result proved that it was not. It was intended to conciliate; it had the effect of alienating:—it was meant to attach the people to the throne; it made them combine for its overthrow: it was designed to produce oblivion of past injury; it induced ambition of future elevation.

Timely concession, it is frequently said, is the only way to prevent a revolution. The observation is just in one sense, but unjust in another; and it is by attending to the distinction between the two great objects of popular ambition, that the means can alone be attained of allaying public discontent, without unhooking the frame of society.

Distinction  
between  
freedom and  
democracy.

There is, in the first place, the love of freedom, that is, of immunity from personal restriction, oppression, or injury. This principle is perfectly innocent, and never exists without producing the happiest effects. Every concession which is calculated to increase this species of liberty, is comparatively safe in all ages, and in all places.

But there is another principle, strong at all times, but especially to be dreaded in moments of excitement. This is the principle of democratic ambition; the desire of exercising the powers of sovereignty; of sharing in the government of the state. This is the dangerous principle; the desire not of exercising industry without molestation, but of exerting power without control.

The first principle will only produce disturbances when real evils are felt; and with the removal of actual grievance, tranquillity may be anticipated. The second frequently produces convulsions, independent of any real cause of complaint; or, if it has been excited by such, it continues after they have been removed. The first never spreads by mere contagion; the second is frequently most virulent when the disease has been contracted in this manner.

Effect of  
Necker's  
concession.

In moments of political agitation, it should be the object of the statesman to remove all real causes of complaint, but firmly resist all rapid encroachments of popular ambition. All restrictions upon personal liberty, industry, or, property; all oppressive taxes; all odious personal dis-

tinctions—should be abandoned; all prosecutions calculated to inflame the passions, and convert a demagogue into a martyr, should be avoided. If punishment is required; the mildest which the case will admit should be chosen; in selecting the species of prosecution, the least vindictive should be preferred. The inflicting of death should, above all things, be shunned, unless for crimes which public feeling has stigmatized as worthy of that penalty. But having conceded thus much to the principles of justice, and the growth of freedom, all attempts at a sudden increase of the power of the people should be steadily opposed, and nothing conceded which tends to awaken the passion of democracy.

In so far as Necker and Turgot laboured to relieve the real evils of France; in so far as they sought to re-establish the finances, curb the powers of the nobles, emancipate the industry of the peasants, purify the administration of justice, their labours were wise and beneficial, and they did all that men could do, to terminate the oppression, and avert the disasters, of their country. In so far as they yielded to public clamour, and conceded unnecessarily to the ambition of the people; in so far as they departed, with undue rapidity, from ancient institutions to acquire temporary popularity, they deserve the censure of posterity, and are answerable for all the disasters which ensued.

The talent of using political power so as not to abuse it, is one of the last acquisitions of mankind, and can be gained only by many ages of protected industry and experienced freedom. It can never with safety be extended to the great body of the people, and least of all, to a nation just emerging from the fetters of servitude: unless the growth of political influence in the lower orders has been as gradual as the changes of time, or the insensible extension of day in spring, it will infallibly destroy the personal freedom which constitutes its principal object. A certain intermixture of the democratic spirit is often indispensable to the extrication of individual liberty, just as a certain degree of warmth is requisite to vivify and cherish animal life: but, unless the fire is restrained within narrow limits, it will consume those who are exposed to its fierceness, not less in political than private life.

The love of real freedom may always be distinguished from the passion for popular power. The one is directed to objects of practical importance and the redress of experienced wrongs; the other aims at visionary improvement and the increase of democratic influence. The one complains of what has been felt, the other anticipates what may be gained; disturbances arising from the first subside, when the evils from which they spring are removed; troubles originating in the second magnify with every victory which is achieved. The experience of evil is the cause of agitation from the first; the love of power the source of convulsions from the last. Reform and concessions are the remedies appropriate to the former; steadiness and resistance the means of extinguishing the flame arising from the latter. The passion of love is not more dependent on the smiles of beauty, than the passion of democracy on the hope of successive augmentations of power.

It is the intention of Nature, that the power of the people should increase as society advances; but it is not her intention that this increase should take place in such a way as to convulse the state, and ultimately extinguish their own freedom. All improvements that are really beneficial, all changes which are destined to be lasting, are gradual in their progress. It is by suddenly increasing the power of the lower orders that the frame of society is endangered, because the immediate effect of such a change is to unsettle men's minds, and bring into full play the most visionary and extravagant ideas of the most

desperate and ambitious men. Such an effect was produced in France by the duplication of the Tiers-État in 1788; and similar consequences will, in all ages, be found to attend the concession of great political powers, at a period of more than ordinary political excitation (1).

Revolution  
headed by  
the higher  
classes.

"No revolution," says Madame de Staël, "can succeed in a great country, unless it is commenced by the aristocratic class; the people afterwards get possession of it, but they cannot strike the first blow.

When I recollect that it was the parliaments, the nobles, the clergy, who first strove to limit the royal authority, I am far from intending to insinuate that their design in so doing was culpable. A sincere enthusiasm then animated all ranks of Frenchmen; public spirit had spread universally, and among the higher classes, the most enlightened and generous, were those who ardently desired that public opinion should have its due sway in the direction of affairs. But can the privileged ranks, who commenced the Revolution, accuse those who only carried it on? Some will say, we wished only that the changes should proceed a certain length; others, that they should go a step further; but who can regulate the impulse of a great people when once put in motion (2)?" A heavy responsibility attaches to those of the higher ranks, who, during periods of agitation, support the demands of the populace for a sudden increase of power, instead of directing their desires to what may really benefit them, the redress of experienced evils. On their heads rest all the disasters and bloodshed which necessarily follow in their train. It is difficult to say which are most worthy of reprobation; the haughty aristocrats, who resist every attempt at practical improvement, when it can be done with safety, or the factious demagogues, who urge on additions to popular power when it threatens society with convulsions. The true patriot is the reverse of both; he will, in every situation, attach himself to the party which resists the evils that threaten his country; in periods when liberty is endangered, he will side with the popular, in moments of agitation, support the monarchical party.

(1) This distinction coincides with that which is drawn by the Viscount St.-Chamans, in his late able and eloquent pamphlet on the Revolution of 1830, between *personal* and *political* freedom. It lies at

the foundation of all rational discussion on this vital subject.—See ST.-CHAMANS, 67, 68.

(2) Rev. Franç. i. 125.

## CHAPTER III.

## CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

## ARGUMENT.

**Elevated state of Science in France at the commencement of the Revolution—Rash innovations of the Constituent Assembly—Opening of the States-General—Speeches of the King and Necker—Ideas of the latter regarding the Revolution—Views of the Tiers-État—And of the Nobles and dignified Clergy—And of the King—Necker's duplication of the Tiers-État—Violent opposition to it from the Nobles and Clergy—Remarkable Prophecy of Beauregard—Composition of the Tiers-État—Absence of Men of Literature and Philosophy, and great Proprietors—Great number of Lawyers—Efforts of Nobles and Court to sway the Assembly—The Tiers-État insist for one Assembly—Violent contests between them and the Nobles—They take the name of National Assembly—Dismay of the Nobles—Enthusiasm over the Country—Necker proposes a mixed Constitution, like the English—Tennis Court Oath—Majority of the Clergy join the Tiers-État—Royal Sitting of 23d June—Duke of Orleans and Forty-seven Nobles join the Tiers-État—The King yields, and enjoins majority of Nobles to do the same—Immense Effervescence in Paris—Revolt of the French Guards—Vigorous measures resolved on by the Court—Change of Ministry—Military Preparations—Consternation of Paris on this—Troops revolt, and are withdrawn to Versailles—Dreadful Tumults in Paris—Storming of the Bastille—Cruelty of the Populace, and their enthusiasm.—The King, being informed of it, yields, and visits Paris—Commencement of the Emigration—Recall of Necker, and Flight of the Ministry—Excesses of the Populace—Consequences of the popular triumph of National Guards—Feudal rights abandoned by the Nobility—Anarchy in France, and Famine in Paris—Consequences of this measure—Rights of man—Formation of the Constitution, and question of the Veto—Democratic state of Paris—State of the Finances—Famine in the capital and provinces—Banquet at Versailles—Agitation and Insurrection at Paris—State of the Assembly and Court—The mob invade Versailles, surround the palace, and nearly murder the King and Queen—Heroic conduct of the latter—Royal Family brought to Paris—Vast changes introduced by the Constituent Assembly—Faults on both sides—General reflections on the causes which precipitated the Revolution.**

The higher branches of science, says Plato, are not useful to all, but only to a few; general ignorance is neither the greatest evil, nor the most to be feared; a mass of ill-digested information is much more dangerous (1). A little knowledge, says Bacon, makes men irreligious; but profound thought brings them back to devotion. In the truths unfolded by these great men, are to be found the remote sources of the miseries of the French Revolution.

Elevated state of science at date of Revolution. Science had never attained a more commanding station than in France at the close of the eighteenth century: astronomy, investigated in its furthest recesses by the aid of mathematical calculations, had, first of all the exact sciences, been brought to perfection; the profound researches of her geometers had rivalled all but Newton's glory; while the talent of her chemists, and the genius of her naturalists, had explored the hidden processes of Nature, and made the remnants of animated life unfold the pristine order of creation. What then was wanting to fit her people for rational liberty, and qualify them for the exercise of the rights of freemen? A sense of religion, the habits of sober thought, and moderation of general opinion; and the want of these rendered all the others of no avail.

Rashness of Constituent Assembly. History affords no example of an era in which innovation was so hastily pursued, and ambition so blindly worshipped; when the experience of ages was so haughtily rejected, and the fancies of the moment

(1) Plato, de Legibus, lib. vii.



so rashly adopted; in which the rights of property were so scandalously violated, and the blood of the innocent so profusely lavished. If we trace these frightful disorders to their source, we shall find them all springing from the pride of a little knowledge; from historical analogies imperfectly understood, examples of antiquity rashly misapplied, dreams of perfection crudely conceived, speculations of the moment instantly acted upon. The danger of such proceedings had been repeatedly exposed; the annals of Tacitus, the discourses of Machiavel, the essays of Bacon, had long before illustrated them; but these, and all the other lessons of experience, were passed over with disdain, and every village politician who had dreamed of politics for a few months, deemed himself superior to the greatest men whom the world had ever produced.

Peril of  
innovation.

The great danger of setting the ideas of men afloat upon political subjects consists in the multitude who can think, compared to the few who can think correctly; in the rapidity with which the most stable institutions can be overturned, compared with the excessively slow rate at which they can be restored. Every man can speak of politics; there is not one in ten who can understand them: every man flatters himself he knows something of history; to be qualified to reason on it correctly, requires the incessant study of half a lifetime. But, unfortunately, the knowledge of the difficulty of the subject, and of the extensive information which it requires, is one of the *last* acquisitions of the human mind; none are so rash as those who are least qualified to govern; none so really worthy of the lead, as those who are least desirous to assume it.

Opening of  
States-  
General.

The 5th of May, 1789, was the day fixed for the opening of the States-General: that was the first day of the French Revolution.

May 4,  
1789.

On the evening before a religious ceremony preceded the installation of the Estates. The King, his family, his ministers, and the deputies of the three orders, walked in procession from the church of Notre-Dame to that of St. Louis, to hear mass. The appearance of the assembled bodies, and the reflection that a national solemnity, so long fallen into disuse, was about to be revived, excited the most lively enthusiasm in the multitude. The weather was fine; the benevolent and dignified air of the King, the graceful manners of the Queen, the pomp and splendour of the ceremony, and the undefined hopes which it excited, exalted the spirits of all who witnessed it. But the reflecting observed with pain, that the sullen lines of feudal *étiquette* were preserved with rigid formality, and they augured ill of the national representation which commenced its labours with such distinctions. First marched the clergy in grand costume, with violet robes; next the noblesse, in black dresses, with gold vests, lace cravats, and hats adorned with white plumes; last, the Tiers-État, dressed in black, with short cloaks, muslin cravats, and hats without feathers (1). But the friends of the people consoled themselves with the observation, that, however humble their attire, the numbers of this class greatly preponderated over those of the other orders (2).

Hardly any of the deputies had hitherto acquired great popular reputation. One alone attracted general attention. Born of noble parents, he had warmly espoused the popular side, without losing the pride of aristocratic connexion. His talents universally known, and his integrity generally suspected, rendered

(1) It was observed that the Duke of Orleans, who walked last, as of highest rank among the nobles, lingered behind, and was surrounded by the

dense masses of the Tiers-État, who immediately followed.

(2) *Mig. i. 30. Th. i. 43.*

him the object of painful anxiety; harsh and disagreeable features, a profusion of black hair, and a commanding air attracted the curiosity even of those who were unacquainted with his reputation. His name was MIRABEAU, future leader of the assembly (1).

Two ladies of rank from a gallery, with very different feelings, beheld the spectacle. The one was Madame de Montmorin, wife of the minister of foreign affairs; the other the illustrious daughter of M. Necker, Madame de Staël. The latter exulted in the boundless prospect of national felicity which seemed to be opening under the auspices of her father. "You are wrong to rejoice," said Madame de Montmorin; "this event forebodes much misery to France and to ourselves." Her presentiment turned out too well-founded: she herself perished on the scaffold with one of her sons; another was drowned; her husband was massacred in the prisons on September 2d; her eldest daughter was cut off in jail; her youngest died of a broken heart before she had attained the age of thirty years (2).

On the following day the Assembly was opened with extraordinary pomp. Galleries, disposed in the form of an amphitheatre, were filled with a brilliant assembly of spectators; the deputies were introduced and arranged according to the order established in the last Convocation in 1614. The clergy sat on the right, the nobles on the left, the commons in front of the throne. Loud applauses followed the entry of the popular leaders, especially those who were known to have contributed to the convocation of the states. M. Necker, in particular, was distinguished by the reception which he experienced. After the ministers and deputies had taken their places, the King appeared, followed by the Queen, the princes, and a brilliant suite. The monarch placed himself upon his throne, amidst the loudest applause, and the three orders at the same instant rose and covered themselves (3). The days were past when the third estate remained uncovered, and spoke only on their knees; that first spontaneous movement was ominous of the subsequent conduct of that aspiring body.

Speech of  
the King.

"Gentlemen," said the monarch, with emotion, "the day which my heart so long desired is at length arrived; I find myself surrounded by the representatives of the nation, which it is my first glory to command. A long period has elapsed since the last convocation of the States-General; and although the meeting of these assemblies was thought to have fallen into desuetude, I have not hesitated to re-establish an usage from which the kingdom may derive new force, and which may open to its inhabitants hitherto unknown sources of prosperity." He concluded with these words:—"Every thing which can be expected from the warmest solicitude for the public welfare—every thing that can be expected from a king, the firmest friend of his people, you may expect from me. May unanimity prevail among you, and this epoch become for ever memorable in the annals of French prosperity!" These sentiments excited at first the warmest expression of gratitude; but, on reflection, the deputies observed, with regret, that nothing tangible was proposed by the crown, and that expressions on the necessity of raising money, and the unsettled state of the public mind was all that followed from these intentions. The speech of M. Necker was anxiously looked for, as explaining the real sentiments of the court; but it was long and undecided, resembling rather the exposition of a cautious financier, than the harangue of a great statesman on the opening of a new political era (4).

(1) *Mad. de Staël*, i. 186.

(2) *Mad. de Staël*, i. 187.

(3) *Mig.* i. 31. *Th.* i. 43.

(4) *Lac. Pr. Hist.* i. 32. *Tb.* i. 34, 44.

Necker's ideas of the Revolution. In truth, notwithstanding his great abilities, the Swiss minister mistook the signs of the times. Pressed by the needy state of the public treasury, his attention was exclusively fixed on the means of replenishing it. He persisted in considering the crisis as financial, when in truth it was social; as arising from embarrassments of government, when it really sprung from the growing importance of the people. He hoped to accommodate his measures to the public exigencies, without compromising or breaking with any party. He was aware that the ancient system of government could not be maintained, but he trusted that the divisions in the political parties would enable him to repair the machine without destroying it. By so doing he lost the confidence of all. Conciliatory measures are admirable, when they are founded on reforms which remove a practical evil; they are ruinous when they proceed on a balance of mutual jealousies, or a blind concession to popular menaces, and irritate all without attaching any (1).

Of the Tiers-État. Liberty and equality were the ideas predominant in the mind of the whole third estate, and of that large party of the clergy, who, emanating from its ranks, were identified with its interests. EQUALITY was the great object of their ambition, because the distinctions of rank were the evil which occasioned their discontents. It was not so much absolute freedom which they coveted, as equality of restraint, and the repeal of all those laws which threw their fetters with undue severity upon the lower classes. They would rather have had servitude in common with the privileged ranks, than freedom accompanied with those privileges which drew an impassable line between them. The passion for distinction, as Napoleon afterwards observed, is the ruling principle in France; equality was demanded because it promised to remove the load which depressed the buoyant ambition of the middling and lower orders of society (2).

Views of the nobles and higher clergy. The greater part of the nobles were naturally desirous of maintaining the privileges which they inherited from their forefathers, and regarded as essential to the existence of government in modern times. Their interests in this, as in most other cases, determined their inclinations, and they were resolved to resist any innovations which threatened to subvert their exclusive advantages. The higher classes of the clergy shared the sentiments of the noble families from which they sprung, and were equally anxious to maintain the privileges from which they derived advantage; but the great body of the undignified ecclesiastics, who were indignant at their exclusion from all situations of consideration or emolument in the church, participated in the feelings of the third estate, with whom they were more immediately in contact, and might be expected, on any serious struggle, to join their ranks (3).

Taken as a body, the clergy had supported all the efforts of the people for the establishment of their liberties. The vast proportion of their numbers, who were humble curés, destitute of any property, was a sufficient security that this would be the case. They had urged the convocation of the States-General; the clergy of Rheims, with their archbishop at their head, demanded, in their instructions to their representatives, the establishment of a national code, containing the fundamental laws of the monarchy, the regular assembly of the States-General, the right of taxing themselves, the establishment of personal freedom, security to property, the responsibility of ministers, open eligibility to all the citizens to all employments, a new civil and military code,

(1) Mig. i. 35.

(2) Riv. 37, 48. Lac. i. 32. Nap. in Duchesse of Abrantes, vii. 269, 270.

(3) Riv. 8. Lac. vii. 9, 10, 11.

uniformity of weights and measures, and the abolition of the slave trade. All the other instructions of the clergy to their representatives contained more or less the same sentiments. It was at a later period in the Revolution, and in consequence of the treachery and injustice with which they were assailed, that this great body became the lasting and inveterate enemy of the Revolution (4).

The King's  
opinion on  
the subject.

The King, who had never tasted one moment of repose since his accession to the throne, had been induced by financial embarrassments, to convoke the States-General, and looked forward to their assembling as the termination of his difficulties. He, in truth, loved his people, and expected to meet their representatives with the tenderness of a parent who rejoins his long-lost children. He believed himself beloved, because he deserved to be so. Unhappily, it was the fashion to laugh at the idea of a revolution; reposing under the shadow of the monarchy, men shut their eyes to the possibility of its overthrow, and deemed present institutions stable, because they had never seen them shaken. They had yet to learn that no reliance is to be placed on the affections of mankind when their interests are at stake; that the force of ancient recollections, strong in periods of tranquillity, is frequently lost in moments of danger; and that attachment to old institutions is powerful only in those who have shared in their protection (2).

M. Necker had adopted two principles very generally received at that period, but of which subsequent experience has amply demonstrated the fallacy; viz. that public opinion is always on the side of wisdom and virtue, and that he could at pleasure sway its impulses (3). The principle, *vox populi vox Dei*, doubtful at all times, is totally misplaced in periods of agitation, when the passions are let loose, and the ambition of the reckless is awakened by the possibility of elevation. Public opinion, in the end, will always incline to the right side; but in the violence of its previous oscillations, the whole fabric of society may be overthrown. The mariner who descries a coming storm, may with certainty predict that its fury will ultimately be stilled; but he cannot be sure that his vessel will not previously be sunk in the waves.

Necker's  
duplication  
of the Tiers-  
État.

Proceeding on this principle, M. Necker adopted the measure already mentioned, which was productive of more disastrous consequences than any single step in the whole history of the Revolution; the duplication of the number of deputies from the Tiers-État (4).

Violent  
opposition  
from the  
nobles and  
clergy.

This decisive step was not taken without the most violent opposition on the part of the privileged classes. They at once perceived that this great increase in the numbers of the third estate more than doubled their influence in the Assembly; and the most violent discontents were excited in all parts of France by so unexpected a measure in their favour. The prelates and dignified clergy felt the utmost disquietude at the number of curés and ecclesiastics of inferior rank, who attended them as members of the States-General. It was evident from their conversation, habits, and manners, that they participated in the feelings of the Tiers-État, with whom they lived in constant communication; and that the unjust exclusion of the middling ranks from the dignities and emoluments of the church, had excited as much dissatisfaction in the ecclesiastical classes, as the invidious privileges of the noblesse had awakened in the laity (5). Their subsequent junction gave the popular party an undisputed ascendancy in the

(1) Chateaubriand, xix. 344. Burke, v. 99.

(2) Lac. vii. 9. Th. i. 41.

(3) Lac. vii. 9, 9. De Staël, i. 240.

(4) Riv. 7. Lac. vii. 9. Mig. i. 23.

(5) Riv. 9. Th. i. 29. Lac. vii. 9.

assembly. It is by the union of the church and the throne that political institutions acquire stability; it was by their separation that they were overturned in France.

But it was not merely by the duplication of the *Tiers-État* that Necker prepared the overthrow of the monarchy. Effects not less prejudicial resulted from the extraordinary laxity which was observed in the formation of the Electoral Assemblies. The King had invited the whole citizens, in benevolent and touching terms, to concur in the choice of representatives (1), and no restriction whatever was imposed on the persons who were to concur in the Primary Assemblies. It was merely provided that they were to choose the electors, and that the choice of the representatives should devolve on the delegates thus chosen, who were in no case to exceed two hundred in number in each bailiwick. Upwards of two millions of Frenchmen were admitted under this regulation to a privilege which substantially amounted to the power of choosing representatives; for the electors were nothing but delegates, who, in every instance, obeyed the directions of their constituents. Finally, this immense body were intrusted with the important privilege of drawing up *cahiers*, or directions to their constituents in regard to the conduct they were to pursue on all the great questions which were to come before them (2). These *cahiers* were absolute mandates, which the representatives bound themselves by a solemn oath to observe faithfully, and support to the utmost of their ability (3).

Nor was this all. Not content with establishing an electoral system, which amounted almost to universal suffrage, and permitting these numerous electors to bind their representatives *a priori* by absolute mandates on all the questions which might occur, Necker imposed no restraint whatever on the persons who were to be chosen as representatives. Neither property, nor age, nor marriage, were required as qualifications. Every Frenchman, of twenty-five years of age, domiciled in a canton, who paid the smallest sum in taxes, was declared eligible. The consequences were disastrous in the extreme. Youths hardly escaped from school; lawyers unable to earn a livelihood in their villages; curates barely elevated either in income or knowledge above their humble flocks; physicians destitute of patients, barristers without briefs; the ardent, the needy, the profligate, the ambitious, were at once vomited forth from all quarters to co-operate in the reconstruction of the monarchy. Very few, indeed, of the assembly were possessed of any property; fewer still of any knowledge. The only restraints on human passion—knowledge, age, property, and children,—were wanting in the great majority of its members; they consisted almost entirely of ardent youths, who already thought themselves equal to Cicero, Brutus, or Demosthenes, or were resolutely bent on

(1) The circular calling together the States-General bore,—"We have need of the concurrence of our faithful subjects, to aid us in surmounting the difficulties arising from the state of the finances, and establishing, in conformity with our most ardent desire, a durable order in the parts of government which affect the public welfare. We wish that the three estates should confer together on the matters which will be submitted to their examination: they will make known to us the wishes and grievances of the people in such a way, that, by a mutual confidence, and exchange of kind offices between the king and people, the public evils should as rapidly as possible be remedied. For this purpose we enjoin and command that, immediately on the receipt of this letter, you proceed to elect deputies of the three orders, worthy of confidence

from their virtues and the spirit with which they are animated; that the deputies should be furnished with powers and instructions sufficient to enable them to attend to all the concerns of the state, and introduce such remedies as shall be deemed advisable for the reform of abuses, and the establishment of a fixed and durable order in all parts of the government, worthy of the paternal affections of the King and of the resolutions of so noble an assembly."—CALONNE, 315; LAB. ii. 335

(2) The collection of these *cahiers*, in thirty-six volumes folio, is the most interesting and authentic monument which exists of the grievances which led to the Revolution. An abstract of this immense record has been published by Prudhomme, in three vols. 8vo; another by Grille, in two vols. 8vo.

(3) LAB. ii. 336, 339.

making their fortunes: they were elected by almost universal suffrage, and subjected to the most rigorous mandates from a numerous and ignorant constituency. And yet from such a body, all classes in France, with a few individual exceptions, expected a deliverance from the evils or difficulties with which they were surrounded, and a complete regeneration of society. The King, the ministers, and courtiers, anticipated a liberation from the vexatious opposition of the parliaments, and more ready submission from a body of men who were thought to be so ill calculated to combine as the *Tiers-État*; the nobles, a restoration of order to the finances, and emancipation from the public difficulties by the confiscation of the church property; the commons, liberation from every species of restraint, and boundless felicity from the prospects which would open to them in the new state of society which was approaching. When hopes so chimerical are entertained by all classes of society, and a chaos of unanimity is produced, composed of such discordant interests, it may usually be concluded that a general infatuation has seized the public mind, and that great national calamities are at hand (1).

Remarkable  
prophecy of  
Beauregard,  
May 20,  
1789.

The prelates sounded the alarm in the strongest terms on this portentous state of things. The torrent of irreligious opinions with which France had lately been deluged, had awakened a general belief amongst the reflecting part of the community that some terrible national catastrophe was at hand. The ex-Jesuit Beauregard, when preaching before the court in Lent, pronounced, with an emphatic voice, these remarkable words, which subsequent events rendered prophetic:—"Yes! thy temples, O Lord, shall be destroyed; thy worship abolished; thy name blasphemed. But what do I hear, great God! to the holy strains which beneath sacred roofs arose in thy praise, shall succeed profane and licentious songs; the infamous rites of Venus shall usurp the place of the worship of the Most High; and she herself sit on the throne of the Holy of Holies, to receive the incense of her new adorers (2)." Who could have imagined that this was literally to be accomplished in four years, within the cathedral walls of Notre-Dame!

Composition  
of the *Tiers-État*.

The *Tiers-État* numbered among its members a great proportion of the talent, and almost all the energy, of France. The leading members of the bar, of the mercantile and medical classes, many of the ablest of the clergy, and almost all the delegates of the towns, were to be found in its ranks.

The bulk of the nation, even at Paris, looked forward to the States-General as a means of diminishing the imposts; the nobility hoped it would prove the means of re-establishing the finances, and putting an end to the vexatious parsimony of later years; the citizens trusted it would remove the galling fetters to which they were still subjected; the fundholders, who had so often suffered from a breach of public faith, regarded it as a secure rampart against a national bankruptcy; an event which the magnitude of the deficit had led them seriously to apprehend. All classes were unanimous in favour of a change, from which all were equally destined to suffer (3).

All who were conscious of talents which were unworthily depressed, who sought after distinction which the existing order of society prevented them from obtaining, or who had acquired wealth without obtaining consideration, joined themselves to the disaffected. To those were added the unsettled spirits which the prospect of approaching disturbances always brings forth; the reckless, the ardent, the desperate; men who laboured under the subsisting

(1) Lab. ii. 337, 350, 351.

(2) Lac. vii. 11.

(3) Dumont, i. 28.

state of society, and hoped that any change would ameliorate their condition. A proportion of the nobles also adhered to their principles, at the head of whom was the Duke of Orleans, who brought a princely fortune, a selfish heart, and depraved habits, to forward the work of corruption, but wanted steadiness to rule the faction which his prodigality had created, and the Marquis La Fayette, who had nursed a republican spirit amidst American dangers, and brought to the strife of freedom in the Old World the ardent desires which had been awakened by its triumph in the New. The Counts Clermont Tonnerre and Lally Tollendal also were attached to the same principles; the Duke de La Rochefoucault, and the Duke de Liancourt, the Marquis de Crillon, and the Viscount Montmorency, names long celebrated in the annals of French glory, and some of which were destined to acquire a fatal celebrity from the misfortunes of those who bore them (1). A portentous union of rank, talent, and energy! of much which the aristocracy could produce that was generous, with all that the commons could furnish that was eminent; of philosophic enthusiasm with plebeian audacity; of the vigour of rising ability with the weight of antiquated splendour.

Two circumstances, however, were remarkable in the composition of the Constituent Assembly, and contributed, in a great degree, to influence its future proceedings.

Absence of  
philosophers  
and literary  
men.

The first was the almost total exclusion of literary and philosophical talent, and the extraordinary preponderance of the legal profession. With the exception of Bailly, and one or two other illustrious individuals, no name of celebrity was to be found among its members. On the other hand, no less than 279 of the Tiers-État were advocates, chiefly from the provincial courts of France (2). This class did not correspond to the barristers of England, who, although not in general men of property, are at least possessed of talent and information, but were provincial advocates, stewards of petty local jurisdictions, country attorneys, notaries, and the whole train of the ministers of municipal litigation, the fomenters of petty war and village vexation. "From the moment," says Mr. Burke, "that I read a list of their names, and saw this, I foresaw distinctly, and very nearly as it happened, all that was to follow (3)!" This fact is not surprising, when it is considered, on the one hand, how few of the electors were capable of appreciating the merits of scientific characters, in a country where not one in fifty could read (4); and, on the other, how closely the necessities of men brought them every where in contact with that enterprising and restless body which lived upon their divisions. The absence of the philosophers is not much to be regretted, as, with a few splendid exceptions, they seldom make good practical statesmen; but the multitude of lawyers turned out an evil of the first magnitude, possessing, as they did, talent without property, and the desire of distinction without the principles which should regulate it. The worst characters in the Revolution—Robespierre, Danton, and almost all their associates—sprung from that class.

The second was the great proportion of the Tiers-État, who were men of no property or consideration in the country, mere needy adventurers, who pushed themselves into the Estates in order to make their fortune amidst the public convulsions which were anticipated. The leading men of the banking and commercial interest were indeed members of this body, and took a pride in being considered its head; but their numbers were inconsiderable, compared with those of their needy brethren, and their talents

Few great  
proprietors.

(1) Lac. vii. 13, 15. Dumont, 38. Th. i. 41.

(2) Lac: vii. 15. v. 93.

(3) Burke, Fr. Rev. Works, vi. 117.

(4) Young's Travels, i. 384.

not sufficient to enable them to maintain an ascendancy. When the contest began, they were speedily supplanted by the clamorous and reckless adventurers, who aimed at nothing but public confusion. France, on this occasion, paid the penalty of her unjust and invidious feudal distinctions; the class was wanting, so well known in England, which, nominally belonging to the Commons, is bound to the Peers by similarity of situation and community of interest; which forms the link between the aristocracy and the people, and moderates the pride of the former by their firmness, and the turbulence of the latter by their authority (1).

The aristocratic party perceiving with dismay that the Tiers-État composed a half of the whole deputies of France, spared no effort to secure the support of the nobles and the clergy. Every thing, it was evident, would depend on their fidelity; a committee of the leaders was held at the hotel of the Countess of Polignac, the head of an ill-fated though generous and devoted family, from whom the royal cause suffered as much in the commencement as in the close of the Revolution. The plan arranged by them was to prevent every thing by conceding nothing; to control Paris by means of the army, the Tiers-État by the influence of the nobility, and the clergy by the hopes of preferment. Every thing was regulated by the precedent of the last meeting of the States-General; they forgot that nearly two centuries had since intervened, and that 1789 was not 1614 (2).

Towards the maintenance of this system, or indeed the establishment of any thing like regulated freedom, it was indispensable that the different orders

(1) Lac. vii. 20.

The Constituent Assembly was composed of 1128 persons, of whom about two-thirds were non-proprietors. They were arranged in the following manner:—

Clergy.		Nobles.	
Archbishops and Bishops, . . . . .	48	Prince of the Blood, . . . . .	1
Abbots and Canons, . . . . .	35	Magistrates, . . . . .	28
Curates, . . . . .	210	Gentilshommes, . . . . .	241
	293		270

Tiers-État.

Ecclesiastics, . . . . .	2
Gentilshommes, . . . . .	12
Mayors, . . . . .	18
Magistrates, . . . . .	62
Lawyers, . . . . .	279
Physicians, . . . . .	16
Merchants, Farmers, etc., . . . . .	176

Nobles and Clergy, 563.—Tiers-État, . . . . . 565

After the Assembly was united, and the parties were divided, they stood thus:—

Côté droit, Royalists.		Côté gauche, Democrats.	
Archbishops and Bishops, . . . . .	39	Prince of the Blood, . . . . .	1
Abbots and Canons, . . . . .	25	Lawyers, . . . . .	160
Curates, . . . . .	10	Curates, . . . . .	80
Nobles, . . . . .	180	Gentilshommes, . . . . .	55
Magistrates, . . . . .	10	Merchants, Farmers, etc., . . . . .	80
Lawyers, . . . . .	18		
Farmers, . . . . .	40		326

322

Centre or undecided.

Clergy, . . . . .	140
Nobles, . . . . .	20
Magistrates, . . . . .	9
Lawyers, . . . . .	101
Tiers-État, . . . . .	210

322

Thus, the Côté Gauche, which ultimately obtained the complete command of the Assembly and France, was at first less than a third of its number.

(2) Mig. i. 36, 37.



should meet apart from each other, and that each should have a negative upon the measures proposed by the other; because the great numbers of the commons, who were all united, gave them a decided preponderance in voting over the other orders, a considerable portion of whom, especially the clergy, were already disposed to join the popular cause. The plan of M. Necker, accordingly, was to form the States into two Chambers, the one composed of the nobles and clergy, the other of the Tiers-État,—similar to the House of Lords and Commons in England (1). Had this plan been steadily adhered to, or been practicable in the excited state of the country, what a multitude of calamities would have been spared to France and to Europe!

Tiers-État  
insist for  
one Assem-  
bly, May 6,  
1789. On the day following the opening of the States-General, the noblesse and the clergy constituted themselves in their respective chambers, while the commons, to whom, on account of their numbers, the general hall of meeting had been assigned, met, and there waited, or pretended to wait, for the other orders. The contest was now openly engaged in; the deputies of the commons alleged that they could not verify their powers till they were joined by the whole Estates, while the clergy and nobles had already verified theirs in their chambers apart, and were ready to begin business. For several weeks they daily met in the great hall, and vainly waited for the accession of the other orders. They attempted nothing, but simply trusted to the force of inactivity to compel the submission of their opponents (2).

Completely  
stops the  
public busi-  
ness. It was soon evident that this state of things could not long continue. The refusal of the commons to constitute themselves, formed a complete stoppage to every sort of business, while the urgent state of the finances, and the rapidly increasing anarchy of the kingdom, loudly called for immediate measures. Mean-while the firmness of the Third Estate occasioned the utmost agitation in Paris, and crowds of all classes daily came to Versailles to encourage the members in their courageous resistance to the measures of the court (3).

Violent con-  
test betwixt  
the parties In this contest the advantage evidently lay on the side of the commons. The state of the finances rendered it absolutely necessary that the States-General should commence their labours; their dissolution, therefore, was not to be apprehended. On the other hand, by simply remaining in a state of inactivity, they did nothing which could apparently justify harsh measures, and there was every reason to believe that they would ultimately weary out their antagonists. The force of public opinion, always at first, in civil commotions, on the side of resistance, was daily strengthening their cause. The agitation of the capital was intimidating their adversaries, and the divisions which prevailed among them rendered it every hour more improbable that they would be able to maintain their ground. The commons were unanimous, while a considerable portion of the nobility, and the greater part of the clergy, secretly inclined to their side (4).

During the discussion on this important subject, the clergy, who wished to bring about a re-union of the orders without openly yielding to the commons, sent a deputation, headed by the Archbishop of Aix, to make a pathetic appeal to them on the miseries of the country people; and he concluded by making a proposal that some deputies of the commons should join a conference with a few of the clergy and nobles, on the best means of assuaging their sufferings. The commons, who did not wish to yield anything, and yet knew not how to decline such a proposal, without compromising themselves

(1) Mig. i. 35.

(2) Lac. vii. 29. Mig. i. 37. Th. i. 45, 46, 49.

(3) Th. i. 50, 53.

(4) Mig. i. 37. Lac. vii. 30. Th. i. 2, 52.

with the people, were at a loss what answer to return, when a young man, unknown to the Assembly, rose and said, "Go and tell your colleagues, that if they are so impatient to assuage the sufferings of the poor, let them come to this hall to unite themselves with their friends; tell them no longer to retard our operations by affected delays—tell them it is vain to employ stratagems like this to induce us to alter our firm resolutions. Rather let them, as worthy imitators of their Master, renounce a luxury which consumes the funds of indigence; dismiss those insolent lackeys who attend them; sell their superb equipages, and convert these vile superfluities into aliment for the poor." At this speech, which so clearly expressed the passions of the moment, a confused murmur of applause ran through the assembly,—every one asked who was the young deputy who had so happily given vent to the public feeling. His name afterwards made every man in France tremble,—it was MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE (4).

Vacillation of the court. At this critical period, the measures of the court were not conducted with the firmness which the circumstances required. Necker had not resolution enough to carry through the only plan which promised security, that of uniting the clergy and nobles in one chamber, and the commons in another. He did not venture to propose it to the Tiers-État, because it would have endangered his popularity, nor to press it on the King, because it had little chance of success. The crown was not yet sufficiently humbled to descend to the restrictions of a limited monarchy. Thus, by wishing to avoid breaking with either party, he lost the confidence of both, and pursued the system of temporization, of all others, in civil convulsions, the most ruinous (2).

It is not the least remarkable of the circumstances of that eventful period, that the higher classes of the noblesse were nearly unanimous in resisting their combination with the clergy into a separate chamber. They were all averse to any union with so mixed a body as the clergy had now become, comprising not less than a hundred curés of plebeian extraction; and those bearing historic names were still more unwilling to become blended with the new nobility, whom they regarded as little better than titled roturiers. The excessive jealousy which the old nobility entertained both for the rural or *campagnarde* noblesse, and those who had recently acquired titles, was one of the great causes which prevented any effectual resistance being opposed to the Revolution. Thus, by a strange fatality, the result of inexperienced pride, the two orders in the state, whose existence was at stake on such a union, were most averse to form it. The formation of two separate chambers was rendered impossible, because no one, not even those whose existence depended on promoting the junction, supported it (3).

Mean-while, the pretensions of the commons hourly increased with the incision of their adversaries. It was no longer a question whether they should, of their own authority, constitute themselves the representatives of the nation; the only doubt was, what title they should assume. The moderate party proposed that they should be called the *Commons* of France, indicating by that expression their bias towards the English constitution. The Abbé

The Tiers-État take the name of National Assembly. June 17, 1789.

Sièyes (4) supported the wishes of the democrats, by contrasting the number of their constituents with those of the privileged orders.

"The Chamber of Nobles," said he, "represents 150,000 individuals, and we 25,000,000. If we yield, it is subjecting twenty-five millions

(1) Dumont, 61. Th. i. 48, 49.

(2) Lac. vii. 31, 32. Mig 31, 38.

(3) Mad. de Staël, i. 196. Th. i. 145. Burke, v.

253.

(4) Dumont mentions a singular instance of the

absurd and perilous vanity with which the leaders of the Assembly regarded their political acquisitions. When walking with Talleyrand and Sièyes, the latter, growing communicative as to his labours, at last said, "Politics is a science which I think I

to the yoke of a few thousands of the privileged orders." The contest, which lasted till past midnight, was conducted with the utmost vehemence; the cries of the opposite parties drowned the voice of the speakers; the wind blew with terrific violence, and rattled the windows, as if the edifice in which they were sitting was about to fall. But Bailly, the president, remained immovable, and the minority, wearied with a fruitless opposition, retired at one in the morning, leaving the assembly in the hands of the popular party. It was then resolved, by a majority of 491 to 90, to assume the title of NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, and intimation was sent to the other orders that they would proceed to constitute themselves, with or without their adherence, which they immediately afterwards did, by that dignified appellation. By the assumption of this title, June 17, 1789. the Tiers-État openly evinced their determination to erect themselves into a sovereign power, and, like the Long Parliament of Charles I, disregard alike the throne and the nobility (1).

Dismay of  
the nobles.

The aristocratical party were thunderstruck by this measure, but they possessed neither abilities, firmness, nor union sufficient to counteract its influence. The Marquis de Montesquieu proposed the only rational course, which was, that to counter-balance this stretch of power by the commons, the nobles and clergy should address the King to constitute them into an Upper Chamber, but they wanted resolution enough to adopt it. The Duke of Luxembourg, the Cardinal La Rochefoucault, and the Archbishop of Paris, besought the King to adopt vigorous measures, and support their orders against the usurpation of the commons, but in vain. The nobility were divided, the court vacillating. Decision belonged alone to the commons, and they, in consequence, speedily obtained the whole power of the state (2).

The next step of the Tiers-État was to declare all imposts illegal, except those voted by themselves, or during the period when they were sitting. At the same time, the fears of the capitalists were tranquillized, by consolidating the public debt, and the alarm of the people allayed, by the appointment of a committee to watch over the public subsistence (3).

Enthusiasm  
over the  
country on  
this event.

No language can describe the enthusiasm which these decisive measures excited throughout all France. Tears of joy were shed when the intelligence was received in the provinces. "A single day," it was said, "has destroyed eight hundred years of prejudice and slavery. The nation has recovered its rights, and reason resumed its sway." But the more thoughtful trembled at the consequences of such gigantic steps: "Not only," said they, "are the noblesse and the clergy set aside, usage disregarded, rights abolished, but the authority of the throne itself is undermined (4). In England, a balance is preserved between the three estates; but here the National Assembly has swallowed up every thing."

Necker  
proposes a  
mixed con-  
stitution.

To meet these increasing dangers, M. Necker was preparing the plan of a constitution calculated to satisfy all classes, and tranquillize the public mind. His measures would have formed a government very similar to the limited monarchy in England; and such, as engrafted on feudal institutions, offered the fairest prospect of stability. He proposed that the whole representation of the nation should vote together in matters of taxation, but by orders in questions of individual rights or privileges; and that hereafter the States-General should meet in separate chambers.

have brought to perfection." Had he possessed, he justly observes, the least idea of the slow progress and excessive intricacy of that most difficult science, he would never have held such language. Presumption in that branch, as in every other, is the result of ignorance. {Dumont, 64.}

(1) Mig. i. 39. Lac. vii. 32. 35. Th. i. 56, 57.

(2) Mig. i. 39. Th. i. 60. Lac. vii. 39.

(3) Mig. i. 39. Riv. 17. Th. i. 59.

(4) Riv. 18.

But the nobles had now gained an ascendancy over the mind of the King, and more violent measures than he approved were resolved on by the court. It was determined to close the hall of the Tiers-État until the 23d June, when the King, in person, was to announce his intentions to the assembled Estates. The object of this measure was to prevent the Tiers-État from acquiring an accession of influence, by the junction of a large body of the clergy, and a considerable portion of the nobility, who were known to be wavering; but its consequences were, to the last degree, fatal to the interests of France (1).

On the 20th June, the heralds-at-arms in Versailles proclaimed that the King would meet the Estates on the 23d, and on the same day the doors of the hall of the States-General were closed by grenadiers of the guard to the deputies of the commons. This step was certainly unfortunate; it announced hostile intentions without explaining them, and irritated the deputies without subduing them. Bailly, the president of the Assembly, went in form to the doors, and finding them closed by orders of the King, he protested against the despotic violence of the crown, and instantly repaired, with the assembled deputies, attended by an immense crowd of spectators, to an adjoining Tennis Court, where the following oath was immediately tendered to the deputies,

Tennis  
Court oath.  
June 20,  
1789.

and first taken by Bailly himself.—“The National Assembly, considering that they have been convoked to fix the constitution of the kingdom, to regenerate the public order, and fix the true principles of the monarchy; that nothing can prevent them from continuing their deliberations, and completing the important work committed to their charge; and that, wherever their members are assembled, there is the National Assembly of France, decree, that all the members now assembled shall instantly take an oath never to separate; and, if dispersed, to reassemble wherever they can, until the constitution of the kingdom, and the regeneration of the public order, are established on a solid basis; and that this oath, taken by all and each singly, shall be confirmed by the signature of every member, in token of their unshakable resolution (2).”

The court on this occasion committed a capital error, in not making the royalist or constitutional party in the Assembly acquainted with their intentions, and preventing that unanimity which necessarily arose from the appearance of measures of coercion, without any knowledge of their object. The consequence was, that the most moderate members, apprehensive of the crown, and alarmed at the apparatus of military force directed against the Assembly, joined the violent democrats, and the oath was taken, with the exception of one courageous deputy, unanimously. This decisive step committed the *whole* Assembly in a contest with the government; the minds of the deputies were exasperated by the apprehended violence, and the oath formed a secret bond of association among numbers, who, but for it, would have been violently opposed to each other. Mirabeau, in particular, whose leaning from the beginning was as much towards the aristocracy as was consistent with a popular leader, openly expressed, at a subsequent period, his dissatisfaction at not having been made acquainted with the real designs of the King. “Was there no one,” said he, “in the Assembly, whom they could make acquainted with their designs? It is thus that kings are led to the scaffold (3)!”

This step was followed on the 22d by an important accession of strength.

(1) Mig. i. 40, 41. Lac. vii. 37, 38. De Staël, Fr. Rév. i. 37. Th. i. 61, 62.

(2) Lac. vii. 39, 41. Th. i. 63, 64. Riv. 19. Mig. i. 41.

(3) Riv. 19. Mig. i. 41. Lac. vii. 29. Dumont, 89, 97.

148 of the clergy join the *Tiers-Etat.* On that day the Assembly met in the church of St.-Louis, as the Tennis Court had been closed by order of the princes to whom it belonged; and they were here joined by 148 of the clergy, who participated in their feelings, and were resolved to share their dangers. This great reinforcement was headed by the Archbishop of Vienne, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and the Bishop of Chartres. They were received with transports of joy and tears of gratitude by the commons, who thus acquired a decided preponderance. By this junction, their majority over the other orders became so great, that the victory of the commons, if they continued in one assembly, was rendered apparent. The spectacle of the union of the clergy with their brethren of the commons, excited the most lively transports, and they embraced each other amidst tears of joy (1). Who could then have foreseen, that in a few weeks the whole ecclesiastical body were to be reduced to beggary by those who now received them as deliverers, and that a clergyman could not appear in the streets without being exposed to the grossest insults! Such is the fate of those who think, by concessions dictated by fear, to arrest the march of a revolution.

It is impossible to refuse a tribute of admiration to those intrepid men, who, transported by a zeal for liberty and the love of their country, ventured to take a step fraught with so many dangers, and which, to all appearance, might have brought many to prison or the scaffold. Few situations can be imagined more dignified than that of Bailly, crowning a life of scientific labour with patriotic exertion, surrounded by an admiring Assembly, the idol of the people, the admiration of Europe. But how vain are the hopes of permanent elevation, founded on the applause of the multitude! Could the eye of prophecy then have unveiled the future, it would have discovered this idol of the people shivering on his face on the Champs-de-Mars, with his arms tied behind his back, and the guillotine suspended over his head, condemned by the Assembly, execrated by the multitude, subjected to a cruel and prolonged punishment to gratify the peculiar hatred and savage vengeance of the populace, whom he now incurred these dangers to support!

The majority of the noblesse, upon hearing of this decisive act on the part of the Commons, which amounted, in effect, to a seizure of the whole powers of government, named a deputation to lay their complaints at the foot of the throne. A minority of forty-seven dissented from this resolution, and shortly after openly espoused the cause of the Commons. In this number were to be found the greatest families and ablest men in the French nobility; the Duke of Orleans, the Duke of La Rochefoucault, the Duke of Liancourt, Count Lally Tollandal, Clermont Tonnerre, the two brothers Lameth, and the Marquis La Fayette. They were almost all guillotined, exiled, or ruined, during the progress of the Revolution; a memorable example of the inability of the higher ranks ultimately to coerce a movement which they themselves put in motion, and of the futility of the idea, that no innovations are dangerous if they are headed by the greatest proprietors in the state (2). ”

Royal sitting of 23d June. At length the famous sitting of the 23d June took place. The King took his seat on the throne, surrounded by his guards, and attended by the pomp of the monarchy: he was received in sullen silence. His discourse commenced by condemning the conduct of the commons, and lamenting the spirit of faction which had already made such progress among the representatives of the people, and was alike contrary to the interests of the nation and the warmest wishes of his heart. The declarations of the monarch

(1) Dumont, 90, 91. Mig. i. 42. Bailly, i. 203. (2) Th. i. 65.  
Riv. 20. Th. i. 74.

Great concessions of the King.

were then read. The first prescribed the form of the meetings of the Estates, and enacted their assemblage by three orders, as essentially linked with the constitution of the state : it regulated the form of their deliberations ; annulled the declarations of the 17th June by the Tiers-État, as contrary to law ; reserved to the crown the right of regulating the future meetings of the States-General, and closed their deliberations against the public. The second embraced an exposition of the rights which the monarch conceded to his people, and they contained the whole elements of rational freedom ; in particular, he abolished the pecuniary privileges, and exemption from taxation, of the nobles and clergy ; put an end to the *taille* and the impost of *Franc fief* ; regulated the expenses of the royal household ; provided for the consolidation of the public debt ; secured the liberty of the press ; established the security of property and of titles of honour ; regulated the criminal code, the personal freedom of the subject, and provided for the maintenance of the public roads, the equality of contributions, and the establishment of provincial assemblies. With truth could the monarch exclaim, " I may say, without fear of self-deception, that never King did so much for his subjects as I have done for mine ; but what other could so well deserve it as the people of France (1) ? "

Give no satisfaction.

These important concessions, which, if supported by proper vigour in the government, might have stopped the Revolution, had no effect in allaying the public discontents. The period was passed when the language of moderation could be heard ; the passions were roused, the populace excited ; and when does passion yield to reason, or the multitude pause upon the acquisition of power ? The concluding words of the King had the air without the reality of vigour ; they took from the grace of the gift without adding to the authority of the giver. He menaced the deputies with his vengeance if they resisted ; threatened to dissolve them ; to carry on the work of reformation by his own authority ; and concluded by commanding them to dissolve, and meet on the following day in their separate chambers. The clergy and the nobles obeyed ; the commons remained alone in the hall (2).

The commons refuse to leave the hall.

The master of the ceremonies, upon this, entered the room, and reminded the members of the intentions of the King. Mirabeau replied,—" Gentlemen, I admit the concessions made by the King would be sufficient for the public good, if the presents of despotism were not always dangerous. What is the insolent dictatorship to which you are subjected ? Is this display of arms, this violation of the national sanctuary, the fitting accompaniment of a boon to the people ? Who prescribes these rules ? Your mandatory ;—he who should receive your commands, instead of giving them to you. The liberty of deliberation is destroyed ; a military force surrounds the Assembly. I propose that, proceeding with becoming dignity, you act up to the spirit of your oath, and refuse to separate till you have completed the constitution." Then, turning to the master of the ceremonies, he continued, " Tell your master that we are here by the order of the people, and that we will not be expelled but at the point of the bayonet."—" You are to-day," said Sièyes, calmly, " what you were yesterday ; let us proceed with our deliberations." On the motion of Camus, they ratified all their proceedings, and declared the persons of the members inviolable (3).

Considered in themselves, these concessions were the greatest ever made by a king to his subjects, and at any other time they would have excited

(1) Riv. 23, 24. Th. i. 67, 68. Lac. vii. 43.

(2) Mig. i. 43. Lac. vii. 45.

(3) Lac. vii. 45. Mig. i. 4. Th. i. 68, 69.

transports of gratitude; but the passions were roused; democratic ambition was thoroughly awakened, and this conciliatory conduct was only adding fuel to the flame. If a government is powerful, whatever it gives is hailed with gratitude as a gift; if it is weak, its concessions are considered as the discharge of a debt, and tend only to rouse the popular party to fresh demands. The Assembly had resolved to become the National Assembly, and to rule France with a despotic authority; any thing less than this seemed unworthy of acceptance. For the King to have made a show of resistance, and done nothing to force it,—announced an intention to uphold the throne, and ended by yielding,—was literally an act of madness, which necessarily led to the ruin of the monarchy (1).

Royal authority overthrown. On that day the royal authority was annihilated in France. The Assembly had openly bid defiance to the mandates of the throne; and public opinion supported them in the attempt. The initiative of laws, the moral influence arising from the idea of supremacy, had passed from the crown to the people (2).

M. Necker was not present at this memorable meeting; the evening before he had tendered his resignation, which was not accepted, as the measures adopted by the court were not such as he thoroughly approved. He was discovered in Versailles by the crowd, and conducted home amidst the loudest acclamations. By his conduct he had evinced the sincerity of his intentions, and his disapproval of the measures of the crown; and he was, for a brief space, thence-forward considered as the leader of the popular party (3).

June 24, 1789. Duke of Orleans and part of the nobility join the Tiers-État. On the following day, the Duke of Orleans and forty-six members of the nobility joined the Tiers-État. They were received with transport; but the duke experienced so much emotion at leaving the chamber of the hereditary legislation, that he fainted in rising from his seat. He was offered the chair of president, which he had the prudence to refuse; his object was the throne; but fate destined him for the scaffold, and the revolutionary sceptre for his less guilty descendants (4).

The King yields, and enjoin the majority of the nobles to do the same. The king, perceiving opposition fruitless, intimated his wish that the remainder of the clergy and the nobility should join the Tiers-État. The nobles made an energetic remonstrance against this measure, and foretold the fatal effects which would follow their being immersed in a body where their numbers were so inconsiderable,

June 25. compared to those of their opponents. “Your Majesty,” said the Duke of Luxembourg, president, “has every thing to fear from a single Assembly, which has already evinced its violence by a rash and illegal oath. If that Assembly beholds us arrive within its walls, what advantage will it not derive from so signal a victory? what can we expect from a body which has so often sworn our ruin? Our presence will increase its consideration, without diminishing its ambition. Apart from the Tiers-État, we form at least a barrier against its fury; our position is doubtless full of dangers, but we will cheerfully face them in defence of the throne.”—“No,” exclaimed the King with emotion, “I cannot allow my faithful nobles to engage in so unequal a struggle. It is alike my wish and my duty to save them from such manifest perils. My mind is made up; *I will not suffer a single person to perish on my account.* Tell the nobles that I entreat them to unite with the other orders; if that is not sufficient, as their sovereign I command them.” The order was obeyed; the nobles and clergy joined the Tiers-État, where they were speedily

(1) Dumont, 87.  
(2) Mig. i. 44. Th. i. 74.

(3) Lac. vii. 47. Mig. i. 44. Th. i. 70.  
(4) Lac. vi. 50. Mig. i. 44. Th. i. 71.

lost in an overwhelming majority. (June 27). The humanity of the King overturned the throne (1).

Immense effervescence in Paris. These events increased to an unparalleled degree the excitation of the public mind in Paris. The young, the ardent, the visionary, believed a second age of gold was arriving; that the regeneration of the social body would purify all its sins, extirpate all its sufferings. The Palais-Royal, recently constructed at an immense expense by the Duke of Orleans, was the centre of the agitation; in its splendid gardens the groups of the disaffected were assembled, under its gorgeous galleries the democratical coffee-houses were to be found (2). It was amidst the din of gambling, and the glitter of prostitution, that Liberty was nurtured in France; it must be owned it could not have had a cradle more impure.

Posterity will find it difficult to credit the fermentation which then prevailed in the capital. The enlightened, from a principle of patriotism; the capitalists, from anxiety about their fortunes; the people, from the pressure of their necessities, which they expected immediately to find relieved; the shopkeepers, from ambition; the young, from enthusiasm; the old, from apprehension; all were actuated by the most violent emotions. Business was at a stand. Instead of pursuing their usual avocations, multitudes of all ranks filled the streets, anxiously discussing the public events, and crowding round every one who had last arrived from Versailles. In one depraved class the fever of revolution was peculiarly powerful. The numerous body of courtizans unanimously supported the popular cause, and by the seduction of their charms contributed not a little to the defection of the military which shortly afterwards took place (3).

Revolt and treason of the French guards, July 1. The regiment of the French guards, consisting of three thousand six hundred men, in the highest state of discipline and equipment, had for some time given alarming symptoms of disaffection. Their colonel had ordered them, in consequence, to be confined to their barracks, when three hundred of them broke out of their bounds, and repaired instantly to the Palais-Royal. They were received with enthusiasm, and liberally plied with money by the Orleans party; and to such a height did the transports rise, that, how incredible soever it may appear, it is proved by the testimony of numerous witnesses above all suspicion, women of family and distinction openly embraced the soldiers as they walked in the gardens with their mistresses. After these disorders had continued for some time, eleven of the ringleaders in the mutiny were seized and thrown into the prison of the Abbey; a mob of six thousand men immediately assembled, forced the gates of the prison, and brought them back in triumph to the Palais-Royal. The King, upon the petition of the Assembly, pardoned the prisoners, and on the following day they were walking in triumph through the streets of Paris (4).

Vigorous measures are resolved on by the court. These alarming events rendered it evident, that some decisive step had become indispensable to prop up the declining authority of the throne. The noblesse recovered from their stupor; even the King became convinced that vigorous measures were called for, to arrest the progress of the Revolution. For some time after their union with the commons, the nobles still met at a different house, and were preparing a protest against the ambition of the National Assembly, which subsequent events rendered nugatory; but the daily diminution of their numbers proved how hopeless in public estimation their cause had become. In this extremity, the

(1) Lac. vii. 56. Th. i. 73. Riv. 33.

(2) Lac. vii. 58. Riv. 43.

(3) Mig. i. 47. Lac. vii. 60. 61. Th. i. 81.

(4) Lac. vii. 60, 63. Mig. i. 47. Th. i. 82, 83.



King, as a last resource, threw himself upon the army. The old Marshal de Broglie was appointed general of the royal army; and all the troops on whom most reliance could be placed, were collected in the neighbourhood of Versailles. "Marshal," said the King, when he first received him, "you are come to assist a king without money, without forces; for I cannot disguise from you that the spirit of revolt has made great progress in my armies. My last hope is in your honour and fidelity. You will fulfil the dearest wishes of my heart, if you can succeed, without violence or effusion of blood, in frustrating the designs of those who menace the throne, and which would, ere long, bring misery on my people (1)." The marshal, ignorant of the changes of the times, answered for the safety of the capital, and immediately established a numerous staff, whose insolence and consequential airs only contributed to increase the public discontents.

They are disapproved of by Necker. Necker openly disapproved of the assemblage of the troops, and Mirabeau prepared an address by the Assembly to the King, praying for their removal. "The danger, Sire," said he, "is pressing, is universal; for the provinces, who, once alarmed for their liberties, may not know how to restrain their violence; for the capital, which, pressed by want and the most cruel apprehensions, will become exasperated by the presence of the soldiers; for the troops themselves, who, brought in contact with the centre of discontent, may share its influence, and forget an engagement which has made them soldiers, to recollect that Nature has made them men. All great revolutions have broken forth from trifling causes; more than once the world has been convulsed from an event much less sinister than the present." —The utmost alarm prevailed in Versailles, and the members of the Assembly beheld with dismay the long trains of artillery and cavalry which incessantly traversed the streets (2).

Military preparations. Change of Ministry. The court now openly adopted hostile measures; the saloons of the palace were instantly filled with generals, colonels, aides-de-camp, and young members of the nobility, whose inexperience and rashness filled the Queen and her supporters with unreasonable confidence in their own strength. The Ministry was completely changed, and M. Necker received not only his dismissal, but an order to quit the kingdom. This formal command was accompanied by a note from the King (3), in which he intimated that he could not prevent his removal, and prayed him to depart in private, for fear of exciting public disturbances. M. Necker received this intimation just as he was dressing for dinner: he dined quietly without divulging it to any one, and set out in the evening with Madame Necker for Brussels.

Consternation in Paris on this event. Paris was thrown into the utmost consternation by this intelligence. Fury immediately succeeded to alarm; the theatres were closed; the Palais-Royal resounded with the cry "To arms;" and a leader of future distinction, Camille Desmoulins, armed with pistols, gave the signal for insurrection by breaking a branch off a tree in the gardens, which he placed in his hat. The whole foliage was instantly stripped off the trees, and the crowds decorated themselves with the symbols of revolt. "Citizens," said Camille Desmoulins, "the moment for action is arrived; the dismissal of M. Necker is the signal for a St. Bartholomew of the patriots; this very evening the Swiss and German battalions will issue from the Champ-de-Mars to massacre us; one resource alone is left, which is to fly to arms." —The crowd unanimously adopted his proposal, and, decorated with green

(1) Lac. vii. 64. Mig. i. 47. Th. i. 85.

(2) Lac. vii. 67, 68. Mig. i. 47. Th. i. 86.

(3) Lac. vii. 69, 70. Mig. i. 47, 48. Th. i. 86.

boughts, marched through the streets, bearing in triumph the busts of M. Necker and the Duke of Orleans. They were charged by the regiment of Royal Allemand, which was put to flight by showers of stones; but the dragoons of Prince Lambesc having come up, the mob were broken, and dispersed through the gardens of the Tuileries. In the tumult, the bearer of the busts, and a soldier of the French guards, were killed; theirs was the first blood shed in the Revolution (1).

Camille  
Desmoulins.

From the lead which he took on this occasion, Camille Desmoulins acquired the name of the "First Apostle of Liberty." Associated with Danton, he long enjoyed the gales of popular favour. He died on the scaffold, the victim of the very faction he had so great a share in creating.

Combats in  
Paris.  
Treachery  
of the army.

The Prince of Lambesc had placed a squadron of dragoons in front of the barracks of the French guards, to intimidate that disaffected regiment. When intelligence of the rout in the gardens in the Tuileries arrived, the troops broke down the iron rails in front of their barracks, and opened a volley upon the horse, which obliged them to retire; they pursued them to the gardens of the Tuileries, and posted themselves in order of battle in front of the populace, and between them and the royal troops. The soldiers in the Champ-de-Mars received orders to advance and dislodge them; they were received by a discharge of musketry, and could not be prevailed on to return the fire. The regiment of Little Swiss was the first to give the example of defection. The monarchy was lost; the household troops had revolted; and the remainder of the army refused to act against the people. (2).

Troops  
withdrawn  
to Versailles.

In this extremity, the measures of the court were neither calculated to conciliate nor overawe. The soldiers were withdrawn from Paris, and collected round Versailles. A regiment was encamped in the splendid orangery of the palace, while the governor of the Bastille in vain demanded troops and ammunition: it seemed as if the government was intent only on intimidating the Assembly, while the gulf of popular insurrection was yawning beneath their feet. They were deceived by the reports of the authorities, who persisted in representing the tumults as only temporary, and guaranteed the safety of the capital. But fatal events soon convinced them of their error (3).

Dreadful  
tumults in  
Paris.

During the absence of the military, the tumults of Paris arose to an unexampled height. Immense bodies of workmen assembled together, and gave vent to the most inflammatory language; aided by the guards, who now openly joined the populace, they broke open the arsenals and gunsmiths' shops, distributed the arms among their adherents, burnt several houses, and opened the barriers, which had been closed by orders of the King. The Hôtel des Invalides was taken, with the aid of the veterans who inhabited it, within sight of the École-Militaire, where the troops of the line were stationed; 20,000 muskets and twenty pieces of cannon were seized, and distributed among the insurgents. The Place de Grève was converted into a vast dépôt of arms, ammunition, and artillery; at the Hôtel-de-Ville a committee was appointed, which rapidly organized an insurrectionary force; 50,000 pikes were immediately forged, and distributed among the people; and it was determined that the armed force should be raised to forty-eight thousand men. This was the commencement of the National Guard of Paris, a body which was of such essential service, sometimes for good, sometimes for evil, during the progress of the Revo-

(1) Lac. vii. 70. Th. i. 89. Mig. i. 48.  
(2) Mig. i. 50. Toul. i. 73. Lac. vii. 74.

(3) Toul. i. 74. Lac. vi. 78, 79.

lution. In decision of conduct and rapidity of organization, the French are superior to any nation recorded in history (1).

Those terrible bands which always make their appearance in civil commotions, and are never seen but on such occasions, now every where showed themselves, as if they had sprung from the earth. This tumultuary array soon received some consistency from the French guards, who were, for the most part, incorporated with it, and rendered the most important services in the conflicts which ensued (2).

Storming of the Bastille. July 14. On the morning of the 14th, intelligence was spread that the troops stationed at St.-Denis were marching on the capital, and that the cannon of the Bastille were pointed down the street St.-Antoine. The cry immediately arose, "To the Bastille;" and the wave of the insurrection began to roll in that direction. The name of that detested fortress, in which the victims of court tyranny had so often been immured, excited the indignation of the populace to the highest pitch, and a formidable insurrectionary force soon surrounded its walls. Eighty invalids and thirty of the Swiss guard constituted its garrison; the artillery was well provided, but the place almost destitute of food for the soldiers. The guns, however, were loaded with grape-shot, the drawbridge raised, and the sentinels posted as during a period of siege. A body of the insurgents was admitted within the first drawbridge to parley with the garrison; transported by ardour, they began, during the conference, to escalate the inner walls, upon which the governor gave orders to fire. Fearful of the effect of grape-shot upon the dense masses of the assailants, the musketry only was at first discharged; but its effect was to repel the leaders of the assault, and the mob fell back in confusion. The arrival of the French guards with artillery, however, speedily changed the scene. These brave men sustained with intrepidity the fire of the fortress which now discharged grape-shot, and from the houses in the vicinity made a vigorous reply with musketry, while the cannon began to batter its ancient walls. By accident or design, the chain which suspended the inner drawbridge was cut, and the bridge fell; an immense assemblage of armed men immediately filled the court, and the garrison (3), seeing further resistance hopeless, hoisted the white flag on the donjon tower, and shortly after laid down their arms.

A bloody revenge stained the first triumph of the arms of freedom. The garrison had capitulated to the French guards on the promise of safety, and the brave Governor Delaunay had only been prevented, by that assurance, from setting fire to the powder magazine, and blowing the fortress and its assailants into the air. But the military were unable to restrain the fury of the populace. During the assault, the daughter of one of the officers was seized by the crowd; they proposed to burn her alive, unless the place was instantly surrendered, and had actually placed her on a mattress, and set fire to it for that purpose, when the atrocious attempt was frustrated by the generosity of one of the French guards, who descended from the escalade, and saved their victim. All the efforts of the soldiers, who had really gained the victory, could not restrain the blood-thirsty vengeance of the people. The Governor Delaunay, and three other officers, fell, pierced by numerous wounds, in the arms of the guard, who were striving to protect them; the mob seized their dying remains, hung them up on the lamp-posts, and, having cut off their heads and one of their hands, carried

(1) Mig. i. 54, 57. Lac. vii. 79, 82. Toul. i. 75. Th. i. 90.

(3) Lac. vii. 83, 85, 88. Mig. i. 60. Toul. i. 76. Th. i. 98, 99, 101.

(2) Th. i. 92.

these bloody trophies aloft on the point of pikes to the central committee in the Place de Grève, amidst shouts of triumph and yells of revenge (1).

M. de Flesselles, provost of the merchants, was the next victim. It was alleged that a letter had been found on the Governor Delaunay which implicated him in treachery to the popular cause. He was seized, and conducted towards the Palais-Royal, to undergo an examination, but shot within a few paces of the Hôtel-de-Ville by one of the mob (2). The bystanders fell on his remains, and suspended them to the lamp-posts.

Enthusiasm  
in Paris.

The enthusiasm in Paris was raised to the highest pitch by the storming of the Bastille, and it became, like the 10th August and the 9th Thermidor, one of the great eras in the Revolution. But its most important and lasting consequence was the establishment of the National Guards of Paris; a civic force of great power and efficiency, and which, though timid and vacillating at first, became at last the great means of rescuing the country from the iron yoke of the populace. Composed of citizens of property and respectability, it generally, though not always, inclined to the side of order, and ultimately was found combating that very despotism which arose out of the insurrection it was originally formed to support.

The night which succeeded this great event was one of extraordinary anxiety and agitation in Paris. The most alarming reports were circulated; that the foreign troops were to issue out of the cellars and sewers, and massacre the inhabitants; that a second St.-Bartholomew was in preparation. The people barricaded the streets, tore up the pavement, carried stones to the tops of the houses, and established guards in the principal quarters. But nothing occurred to justify the alarm, and the anxiety of a sleepless night only added to the intense feelings which agitated the populace (3).

Measures of  
the court.

Mean-while, the designs of the court were rapidly approaching a state of maturity. Infatuated by the reports which were transmitted to them from the military commanders, surrounded by an impetuous and inconsiderate nobility, they entertained the project of restoring tranquillity to the capital by the immediate application of military force. The cannon of the Bastille, which was distinctly heard at Versailles, was considered as a favourable omen; as it indicated the commencement of an actual engagement, and the termination of the fatal irresolution of the troops. The old officers laughed at the idea of the Bastille being taken, and persisted in representing the tumults as a passing affair. It was resolved, on the 15th, to dissolve the Assembly, to publish 40,000 copies of the Declaration of the 23d June, and cause the Marshal de Broglio to move with an overwhelming force upon the capital. Still, the insurmountable aversion of the King to the effusion of blood controlled all the measures of the army; and there seems no doubt that he never would have permitted them to fire, but in resisting the aggression of the insurgents (4).

The King  
wakened in  
the night.

But, in the night, intelligence of the real state of affairs was received; that the Bastille was taken; Paris in insurrection; the guards in open revolt; the regiments of the line in sullen inactivity. The Assembly, which had constantly sat for the two preceding days, was violently agitated by the intelligence. It was proposed to send a new deputation to the King, to urge the removal of the troops. "No," said Clermont-Tonnerre, "let us leave them this night to take counsel: it is well that kings, like private men,

(1) Lac. vii. 86, 89. Mig. i. 60, 61. Th. i. 100, 101.

(2) Mig. i. 62. Lac. vii. 90, Th. i. 102.

(3) Mig. i. 62. Lac. vii. 92, 93.

(4) Mig. i. 63. Th. i. 96, 97. Toul. i. 76, 77. Lac. vii. 94, 97, 98.

should learn by experience (1).” The Duke de Liancourt took upon himself the painful duty of acquainting the King with the events which had occurred, and proceeded to his chamber in the middle of the night for that purpose. “This is a revolt,” said the King, after a long silence. “Sire,” replied he, “it is a revolution (2).”

And yields.  
July 15. Finding resistance hopeless, from the universal defection of the troops, the King immediately resolved upon submission, a measure which relieved him of the dreadful apprehension of causing an effusion of blood. On the following morning, he repaired, without his guards or any suite, accompanied only by his two brothers, to the Assembly. He was received in profound silence. “Gentlemen,” said he, “I am come to consult you on the most important affairs: the frightful disorders of the capital call for immediate attention. It is in these moments of alarm that the Chief of the nation comes, without guards, to deliberate with his faithful deputies upon the means of restoring tranquillity. I know that the most unjust reports have been for some time in circulation as to my intentions; that even your personal freedom has been represented as being in danger. I should think my character might be a sufficient guarantee against such calumnies. As my only answer, I now come alone into the midst of you; I declare myself for ever united with the nation, and relying on the fidelity of the National Assembly (3); I have given orders to remove the troops from Versailles and Paris; and I invite you to make my dispositions known to the capital.”

Immense applause followed this popular declaration; the Assembly, by a spontaneous movement, rose from their seats, and reconducted the monarch to the palace. A deputation, with the joyful intelligence, was immediately dispatched to Paris, and produced a temporary calm in its fervent population. Bailly was named mayor of the city, and La Fayette commander of the armed force (4).

The King  
visits Paris.  
July 17. On the 17th the King set out from Versailles, with few guards and a slender suite, to visit the capital, upon whose affections his sole reliance was now placed. A large part of the National Assembly accompanied him on foot; the *cortège* was swelled on the road by an immense concourse of peasants, many of whom were armed with scythes and bludgeons, which gave it a grotesque and revolutionary aspect. The Queen parted with him in the most profound grief, under the impression that she would never see him more. He had received in the morning intelligence of a design to assassinate him on the road, but that made no change on his resolution. The march, obstructed by such strange attendants, lasted seven hours; during which the King was made to taste, drop by drop, the bitterest dregs of misery. He was received at the gates by Bailly, at the head of the municipality, who presented to him the keys of the city. “I bring your majesty,” said he, “the same keys which were presented to Henry IV. He entered the city as a

(1) Toul. i. 78. Mig. i. 66. Th. i. 103.

(2) During these events, the Assembly was in the most violent state of agitation. The most alarming reports arrived every half hour from Paris; the members remained in the hall of meeting in the utmost anxiety; the sound of the cannon was distinctly heard, and they applied their ears to the ground to catch the smallest reverberation. No less than five deputations, during forty-eight hours, waited on the King, who was in as great a perplexity and terror at the effusion of blood as themselves. But nothing could daunt the audacious spirit of Mirabeau. “Tell the King,” said he to the last deputation which set out, “that the foreign bands

by which we are surrounded, have yesterday been visited and flattered by the princess and prince, and received from them both presents and caresses. Tell him, that all night in his palace, even these foreign satellites, amidst the fumes of wine, have never ceased to predict the subjugation of France, and to breathe wishes for the destruction of the Assembly. Tell him, that in his very palace the courtiers have mingled dancing with these impious songs, and that such was the prelude to the massacre of St. Bartholomew. [Th. i. 104.]

(3) Toul. i. 79. Th. i. 105.

(4) Th. i. 106, Mig. i. 67.

conqueror; now it is the people who have regained their sovereign." Louis advanced to the Hôtel-de-Ville through the midst of above one hundred thousand armed men, under an arch formed of crossed sabres. The whole of the immense crowd bore tricolor cockades, now assumed as the national colours. At the Pont-Neuf, he passed a formidable park of artillery; but at the touch-hole and mouth of each had been placed a garland of flowers. Few cries of *Vive le Roi* met the ears of the unfortunate monarch; those of *Vive la Nation* were much more numerous; but when he appeared at the window of the Hôtel-de-Ville, with the tricolored cockade on his breast, thunders of applause rent the air, and he was reconducted to Versailles amidst the most tumultuous expressions of public attachment (1).

Commencement of the emigration. The day of the King's entry into Paris was the first of the emigration of the noblesse. The violent aristocratical party, finding all their coercive measures overturned, and dreading the effects of popular resentment, left the kingdom. The Count d'Artois, the Prince of Condé, the Prince of Conti, Marshal Broglio, and the whole family of the Polignacs, set off in haste, and arrived in safety at Brussels,—a fatal example of defection, which, being speedily followed by the inferior nobility, produced the most disastrous consequences. But it was the same in all the subsequent changes of the Revolution. The leaders of the royalist party, always the first to propose violent measures, were at the same time unable to support them when furiously opposed; they diminished the sympathy of the world at their fall from so high a rank, by showing that they were unworthy of it (2).

The Ministry fly. The whole ministry, being impeached by the National Assembly, followed the example of the nobility, by flying from the country; Necker recalled, July 21. and, at the same time, M. Necker, and the popular leaders, were recalled. The messenger overtook him at Bâle, to which place he had arrived on his journey to his native country. His return to Paris was a continued triumph. Every where he received the most intoxicating proofs of public gratitude; but his entry to Paris was not only the zenith of his popularity, but also its end. He seemed to have a presentiment of his approaching fall, for, on entering his apartment at Versailles, he exclaimed to one of his friends,—“Now is the moment that I should die (3)!”

Murder of Foulon and Berthier. A melancholy proof awaited him of the inability even of the most popular minister to coerce the fury of the populace. Long lists of proscription had for a considerable time been fixed at the entrances of the Palais-Royal, at the head of which was the name of M. Foulon, an old man above seventy years of age, who had been appointed to the Ministry which succeeded Necker, but never entered upon his office. He was seized in the country, and brought into Paris with his hands tied behind his back. July 22.

The vengeance of the people could not wait for the forms of trial and condemnation; they broke into the committee-room where he was undergoing an examination before La Fayette and Bailly, and in spite of the most strenuous efforts on their part, tore him from their arms, and hung him up to the lamp-posts. Twice the fatal cord broke, and the agonized wretch fell to the ground in the midst of the multitude; and twice they suspended him again amidst peals of laughter and shouts of joy. It was with such terrific examples of wickedness that the regeneration of the social body commenced in France (4).

M. Berthier, son-in-law to M. Foulon, soon after shared the same fate.

(1) Lac. vii. 105, 109. Th. i. 105, 109. Toul. i.

82, 83. Burke, v. 139.

(2) Mig. i. 68. Toul. i. 83. Th. i. 108.

(3) Toul. i. 85. Mig. i. 68.

(4) Lac. vii. 117. Mig. i. 68. Th. i. 115, 117.

He was arrested at Compiègne, and after undergoing the utmost outrages on the road, was brought to the Hôtel-de-Ville, where the mob presented to him the head of his parent, yet streaming with blood. He averted his eyes, and, as they continued to press it towards his face, bowed to the ghastly remains. The efforts of Bailly and La Fayette were again unsuccessful; he was seized by the mob, and dragged towards the lamp-post; but at the sight of the cord, which they prepared to put about his neck, he was seized with a transport of indignation, and, wresting a musket from one of the National Guard, rushed into the troop of his assassins, and fell pierced with innumerable wounds. One of the cannibals fell on his body, and tore out his heart, which he bore about in triumph, almost before it had ceased to beat. The heads of Berthier and Foulon were put on the end of pikes, and paraded in the midst of an immense crowd, through the streets of Paris (1).

Horror-struck at these sanguinary excesses, M. Necker demanded of the Assembly of electors at Paris, and obtained, a general amnesty for political offences. His chief object in doing so was to save the life of the Baron de Besenval, second in command under the Marshal Broglio, formerly his political opponent, whom, at the hazard of his own life, he had generously saved from the fury of the people on his road from Bâle, at the distance of a few leagues from Paris. But in taking this humane step, Necker experienced, for the first time, his inability to rule the Revolution, and felt the thinness of the thread on which the applause of the people is founded. His efforts were nugatory. On the following day Mirabeau brought the matter under the consideration of the Assembly—"Whence come it," said he, "that the municipality takes upon itself, under the very eyes of the Assembly, to publish an amnesty for offences? Has the cause of freedom, then, no more perils to encounter? We may pardon M. Necker his generous but indiscreet proceeding, which in any other but him would have been criminal; but let us, with more calmness and equal humanity, establish the public order, not by general amnesties, but a due separation of the judicial functions from those of the multitude." The Assembly, accordingly, reversed the decree of the electors of Paris, and political revenge received ample scope for its development (2).

Consequences  
of the 14th  
July.

The consequences of the insurrection of 14th July were immense. The movement of Paris was communicated to the provinces; every where the lower orders, in imitation of the capital, organized themselves into independent bodies, subject to their respective municipalities, and established national guards for their protection. The immediate cause of this prodigious armament was the propagation through all France of the most alarming reports as to the approaching destruction of the harvest by brigands, who were traversing the country in all directions,—a stratagem played with the most complete success by the leaders of the Revolution, in order to place the armed force of the kingdom at their disposal (3).

Three hundred thousand men were speedily enrolled for the support of the popular side; the influence of government, as well as the power of the sword, passed into the hands of the people. The new magistrates were appointed by the mob, and of course taken from the most zealous supporters of the popular right; their authority alone was respected. The old functionaries, finding their power gone, every where became extinct. In less than a fortnight there was no authority in France but what emanated from the people (4).

(1) Lac. vii. §117, 118. Toul. i. 86. Th. i. 117.

(2) Lac. vii. §122, 127. Mig. i. 68, 69. Th. i. 119.

(3) Th. i. 126.

(4) Mig. i. 69, 70. Toul. i. 97.

Dreadful  
confusion  
and anarchy  
in France.

But the effects of this Revolution on the order of society were at first lamentable in the highest degree. The regiments of the line every where declared for the popular side; the whole populace possessed themselves of arms; no power any where remained to resist the insurrection of the lower orders. At Caen, and several other towns, the massacres of the metropolis were too faithfully imitated. M. de Belzunce, who endeavoured to restrain the excesses of his regiment, was put to death with the most aggravated circumstances of cruelty; his remains were literally *devoured* by his murderers (1). Every where the peasants rose in arms, attacked and burnt the châteaux of the landlords, and massacred or expelled the possessors. The horrors of the insurrection of the Jacquerie, in the time of Edward III, were revived on a greater scale, and with deeper circumstances of atrocity. In their blind fury they did not even spare those seigneurs who were known to be inclined to the popular side, or had done the most to mitigate their sufferings or support their rights. The most cruel tortures were inflicted on the victims who fell into their hands; many had the soles of their feet roasted over a slow fire before being put to death; others had their hair and eyebrows burnt off, while they destroyed their dwellings, after which they were drowned in the nearest fish-pond. The Marquis of Barras was cut into little bits before his wife, far advanced in pregnancy, who shortly after died of horror; the roads were covered with young women of rank and beauty flying from death, and leading their aged parents by the hand. It was amidst the cries of agony, and by the light of conflagration, that liberty arose in France (2).

The Assembly published several energetic proclamations against these acts of violence, but they had not the slightest effect in repressing them. Indeed, they were so far committed in a contest with the crown and the aristocracy, that instead of repining they rejoiced in secret at atrocities which seemed necessary to complete the intimidation of their adversaries. They felt that they had put themselves in a situation where they must either fear the noblesse, or be feared by them. Thus, for decency's sake, they blamed openly, and applauded privately; they conferred praises on the constituted authorities, and in secret gave encouragement to license. The usual consequence of violent usurpation is, to compel men to plunge deeper into the stream of revolution, and commit the greater crimes, to save themselves from the consequence of the lesser which they have already perpetrated (3).

Misery and  
famine in  
Paris.

Nor were these disorders confined to the provinces. Paris was in such a state of confusion, the disorder arising from so many co-existing authorities was so excessive, the supply of provisions so precarious, that the utmost exertions of Bailly and the municipality were required to prevent the people from dying of famine in the streets. Tailors, shoemakers, bakers, blacksmiths, met at the Louvre, the place Louis XV, and other quarters, deliberated on the public concerns, and set at defiance the Hôtel-de-Ville and the municipality. Night and day Bailly and the Committee of Public Subsistence were engaged in the Herculean labour of providing for the wants of the citizens; the usual sources of supply had totally ceased with the public confusion; the farmers no longer brought their grain to market, fearing that it would be seized for nothing by the sovereign multitude; and the people, as the first consequences of their triumph, were on the point of perishing of famine. Every thing required to be provided for and done by the public

(1) Lac. vii. 129.

(3) Dumont, 133, 134.

(2) Lac. vii. 130, 132. Th. i. 127. Chateaub.  
Mem. 83, 84.



authorities; large quantities of grain were bought by their agents in the country, and conducted into Paris, like a besieged city, in great convoys, guarded by regiments of horse. It was ground at the public expense, and sold at a reduced rate to the citizens; but such was the anxiety of the people, that all these pains would not suffice, and loud complaints that the citizens were starving, incessantly assailed the Assembly. All the efforts of the government could not supply the want of that perennial fountain of plenty and prosperity, which arises from public confidence (1).

Notwithstanding all the efforts of government, however, the distress in Paris, both on the part of the municipality and the citizens, soon became overwhelming. Almost every species of manufacture was at a stand: the purchases by the wealthy classes had totally ceased, and all the numerous artisans who depended on it, in that great mart of luxury and indulgence, were in the utmost straits. The popular magistrates were obliged to dissipate all the corporate funds at their disposal, but that supply afforded only a temporary relief, and after exhausting their credit, and overwhelming with debt the public revenue, they were obliged to come to the National Assembly, with the piteous tale that their resources were exhausted, and that Paris, as the first fruits of its political regeneration, was on the verge of ruin (2).

La Fayette, and the officers of the Revolution, were more successful in their efforts to establish an efficient civil force. Military organization, more readily than civil order, grows out of insurrectionary troubles. By incorporating the French guards, a number of Swiss, and a vast body of deserters from the regiments of the line into the National Guard, he succeeded in composing an efficient force, which, under the name of Companies of the Centre, at length made head against the public disorders. They were all clothed in uniform, and to the colours of the Parisian cockade, blue and red, joined white, the colours of the royal family. Thus was formed the *tricolor cockade*, of which La Fayette nearly predicted the destinies when he said it would make the tour of the globe (3).

These atrocities were followed by an unexampled proceeding on the part of the National Assembly. On the night of the 4th August, the Duke de Noailles gave the signal for innovation, by proposing that the burden of taxes should fall equally on all; that all the feudal rights should be declared liable to redemption, and personal servitude simply abolished. This, though a great concession, founded alike in justice and expedience, was far from satisfying the popular party. A painful picture of the oppression of feudal rights was drawn, and the generosity of the nobles piqued to consent to their voluntary surrender. They began contrary to all expectation, to run against each other in proposing the abolition of abuses; the contagion became universal; in a few hours the whole feudal rights were abandoned. The Duke du Châtelet proposed that the redemption of tithes should be allowed, and that they should be commuted into a payment in money; the Bishop of Chartres, the suppression of the exclusive right of the chase. The more important rights of feudal jurisdiction in matters of crime, of the disposal of offices for gain, of pecuniary immunities, of inequality of taxes, of plurality of benefices, of casual emolument to the clergy, of annats

Abandonment of the feudal rights by the nobles. August 4.

subsequent to the Revolution, amount to 2,500,000 fr. (L. 100,000) in a single year. From these expenses, and the great falling off in the produce of the free gifts, not only a momentary, but a total want of money has taken place."—See BURKE'S *Consid. Works*, v. 431.

(3) Th. i. 112, 113.

(1) Th. i. 141.  
(2) "In July, 1789," said M. Bailly, Mayor of Paris, author of the Tennis Court Oath "the finances of the city of Paris were yet in good order; the expenditure was balanced by the receipts, and she had 1,000,000 francs (L. 40,000) in the bank. But the expenses she has been constrained to incur,

to the court of Rome, were successively abandoned; finally, the incorporations and separate states sacrificed their privileges; the Bretons, the Burgundians, the Languedocians, renounced the rights which had withstood the tyranny of Richelieu and Louvois. All the monuments of freedom, which the patriotism of former times had erected, were swept away, and the Liberty established in its stead, founded on an imaginary and inexperienced basis (1).

Its prodigious effects. It has truly been said, that this night changed the political condition of France. It delivered the land from feudal power, the person from feudal dependence, the property of the poor from the rapacity of the rich, the fruits of industry from the extortion of idleness. By suppressing private jurisdictions, it introduced public justice; by terminating the purchase of offices, it led to purity in the discharge of their duties. The career of industry, the stimulus of ambition, was thenceforward opened to all the people, and the odious distinction of noble and roturier, patrician and base-born, the relics of Gothic conquest, for ever destroyed.

Had these changes been introduced with caution, or gradually grown out of the altered condition of society, there can be no doubt that they would have been highly beneficial; but coming as they did suddenly and unexpectedly upon the world, they produced the most disastrous consequences, and contributed, more than any other circumstance, to spread abroad that settled contempt for antiquity, and total disregard of private right, which distinguished the subsequent period of the French Revolution. The ideas of men were entirely overturned, when rights established for centuries, privileges contended for by successive generations, and institutions held the most sacred, were at once abandoned. Nothing could be regarded as stable in society after such a shock; the chimeras of every enthusiast, the dream of every visionary, seemed equally deserving of attention with the sober conclusions of reason and observation, when all that former ages had done was swept away in the very commencement of improvement. The minds of men were shaken as by the yawning of the ground during the fury of an earthquake; all that the eye had rested on as most stable, all that the mind had been accustomed to regard as most lasting, disappeared before the first breath of innovation. The consequences of such a step could not be other than fatal. It opened the door to every species of extravagance, furnished a precedent for every subsequent spoliation, and led immediately to that ferment of minds, when the most audacious and the least reasonable are sure of obtaining an ascendancy.

The event accordingly proved the justice of these principles. "The decrees of the 4th August," says Dumont, "so far from putting, as was expected, a stop to the robbery and violence that was going on, served only to make the people acquainted with their own strength, and to inspire them with a conviction, that all their outrages against the nobility would pass with impunity. Nothing done through fear succeeds in its object (2). Those whom you hope to disarm by concessions, are only led by them to still bolder attempts and more extravagant demands."

Contrast of the French and English revolutions. Nothing can more distinctly mark the different characters of the French and English Revolutions, than the conduct of the two nations in their first measures of legislative improvement after the royal power had fallen. The English were solicitous to justify their resistance by the precedent of antiquity; they maintained "that they had *inherited* this freedom;" and sought only to *re-establish* those ancient landmarks which had

(1) *Mig. i. 71. Lac. vii. 140. Th. i. 129, 131.*

(2) *Dumont, 149.*

disappeared during the indolence or usurpation of recent times (1). The French commenced the work of reformation by destroying every thing which had gone before them, and sought to establish the freedom of future ages by rooting out every thing which had been done by the past. On the ancient stock of Saxon independence the English engrafted the shoots of modern liberty; in its stead the French planted the unknown tree of equality. In the British isles the plant has become deeply rooted, and expanded widely in its native air; time will show whether the French have not wasted their endeavours in training an exotic, unsuited to the climate, and unfruitful in the soil.

Consequences of this measure. The consequences of this invasion of private right were soon apparent. Three days after, the popular leaders maintained that it was not the power of redeeming, but the *abolition* of tithes, which had been voted; and that all that the clergy had a right to was a decent provision for their members. They found an able but unexpected advocate in the Abbé Siéyes. "If it is yet possible," said he, "to awaken in your minds the love of justice, I would ask, not if it is expedient, but if it is just, to despoil the church? The tithe, whatever it may be in future, does not at present belong to you. If it is suppressed in the hand of the creditor, does it follow from that that it is extinguished also in that of the debtor, and become your property? You yourselves have declared the tithe redeemable; by so doing you have recognised its legal existence, and cannot now suppress it. The tithe does not belong to the owner of the soil. He has neither purchased it, nor acquired it by inheritance. If you extinguish the tithes, you confer a gratuitous and uncalled-for present on the landed proprietor, who does nothing, while you ruin the true proprietor, who instructs the people in return for that share of its fruits." He concluded with the celebrated expression—"You would be free, and you know not how to be just (2)."

Mirabeau supported the abolition of the tithes. He argued that the burden of supporting the public worship should be borne equally by all; that the state alone was the judge whether it should fall exclusively on the landed proprietors, or be made good by a general contribution of the citizens; that it robs no one, if it makes such a distribution of the burden as it deems most expedient; and that the oppressive weight of this impost on the small proprietors loudly called for its imposition on the state in general. For this purpose he proposed that the clergy should be paid by salaries. As that expression created some disapprobation, he added, "I know but three ways of living in society : August 13. you must be either a beggar, a robber, or a stipendiary." The clergy had the generosity to intrust their interests to the equity of the Assembly; the only return they met with was the suppression of tithes, under the condition that the state should fitly provide for religion and its ministers,—an obligation which was solemnly committed to the honour of the French nation, but which afterwards was shamefully violated, and in fact became perfectly illusory (3). Thus the first fruits which the clergy derived from their junction with the Tiers-État, was the annihilation of their property, and the reduction of all themselves to beggary. In this there was nothing surprising; gratitude is unknown in public assemblies. When men vote away the property of others, they can expect no mercy for their own; when the foundations of society are torn up, the first to be sacrificed are the most defenceless of its members.

But the fruits of injustice seldom prosper with nations any more than indi-

(1) Burke, vii. 72.

(2) Th. i. 134. Dumont, 147.

(3) Lac. vii. 145, 147. Toul. i. 103. Dumont, 147. Th. i. 135.

viduals. The confiscation of the immense landed estates of the church, amounting to nearly a third of France, proved no relief to the public necessities till the issuing of assignats on their security began. Extraordinary as it may appear, it is a well-authenticated fact, that the expenses of managing the church property cost the nation L.2,000,000 a-year more than it yielded, besides in a few years augmenting the public debt by L.7,000,000. This is noways surprising. In the confusion consequent on so great an act of spoliation, no account of the revenues of the ecclesiastical domains could be obtained, and the leaders who had sanctioned so great an act of robbery found it impossible, after its commission, to restrain the speculation of their inferior agents (1). This is the more remarkable, as the ecclesiastical estates produced a clear net revenue of 70,000,000 francs, or L.2,800,000 yearly.

The innovators, in the Assembly, who had joined in the popular party from a belief, that, in so doing lay their only chance of preserving the wreck of their property, now perceived, with bitter regret, the infatuated course they had pursued, and the hopelessness of any expectation, that, by yielding to revolutionary demands, they would satisfy the people. The Bishop of Chartres, one of the popular bishops who had supported the union of orders, the vote by head, and the new constitution, was then visited by Dumont, when he was dismissing his domestics, selling his effects, and leaving his house to discharge his debts; with tears in his eyes, the benevolent prelate deplored the infatuation which had led him to embrace the cause of the Tiers État, which violated in its prosperity all the engagements contracted in its adversity. The Abbé Sièyes, who had taken so decided a part in the early usurpations of the Assembly, was hissed and coughed down, when he strove to resist the iniquitous confiscation. Next day he gave vent to his spleen to Mirabeau, who answered, "My dear abbé, you have loosed the bull : do you expect he is not to make use of his horns (2)?"

This first and great precedent of iniquity, the confiscation of the property of the church, was brought about by the selfish apathy, or secret wishes, of the great majority of the laity. All classes felt that the financial difficulties of the state were nearly insurmountable, and all anticipated a sensible relief from any measure, how violent soever, which might lead to their extrication. It was the universal belief that this embarrassment was the main cause of the public difficulties; and the secret hope that the property of the church was the holocaust which would at once put an end to it, was the real cause which occasioned this general and iniquitous coalition. All imagined that some interest must be sacrificed, and the church was pitched upon as at once the most wealthy and defenceless body in the state. But, like all other measures of spoliation this great invasion on private right rapidly and fatally recoiled on the heads of those who engaged in it. The ecclesiastical estates, it was soon found, in the hands of the revolutionary agents, encumbered as they were with the debts of the clergy, yielded no profit, but were rather a burden to the state : to render them available, the contraction of debt on their security became necessary; the temptation of relieving the public necessities by such a step was irresistible to a public and irresponsible body, holding estates to the amount of nearly two hundred millions sterling in their hands. Hence arose the system of ASSIGNATS, which speedily quadrupled the strength of the republican government, rendered irretrievable the march of the Revolution, and involved all classes in such inextricable difficulties, as rapidly brought home to every interest in the state the spoliation which they had begun by inflicting on the weakest.

(1) Calonne, 81, 92; and Burke, v. 421.

(2) Dumont, 66, 67, 147.

Abolition of  
the right of  
shooting and  
hunting.  
Its effects.

The abolition of the exclusive right of hunting and shooting, was made the pretext for the most destructive disorders throughout all France. An immense crowd of artisans and mechanics issued from the towns, and, joining the rural population, spread themselves over the fields in search of game: the greatest violence was speedily committed by the armed and incontrollable multitude. Enclosures were broken down, woods destroyed, houses broken open, robbery perpetrated, under pretence of exercising the newly regained rights of man. Mean-while, the burning of the châteaux, and the plunder of the landed proprietors, continued without intermission, while the Assembly, instead of attempting to check these disorders, issued a proclamation, in which they affected to consider them as the work of aristocrats, who were desirous of bringing odium upon the Revolution. One of the most singular effects of the spirit of faction, is the absurdities which it causes to be embraced by its votaries (1), and their extraordinary credulity in regard to every thing which seems calculated to advance the interests of their party (2).

Rights of  
Man.  
August 18.

The next step of the Assembly was the publication of the famous *Rights of Man*,—a composition which, amidst much obvious and important truth, contains a most dangerous mixture of error, and which, if not duly chastened by the lessons of experience and the observation of history, is calculated to convulse society. It declares the original equality of mankind; that the ends of the social union are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression; that sovereignty resides in the nation, and every power emanates from them; that freedom consists in doing every thing which does not injure another; that law is the expression of the general will; that public burdens should be borne by all the members of the state in proportion to their fortunes; that the elective franchise should be extended to all; and that the exercise of natural rights has no other limit but their interference with the rights of others. In these positions, considered abstractly, there is much in which every reasonable mind must acquiesce; but the promulgation of the agreeable but perilous principles of sovereignty in the people, of the natural equality of mankind, and the extension of the elective franchise to every citizen, only proves how ignorant the legislators of that period were of the real character of mankind, and how little they were aware of that inherent depravity in human nature, to which so many of themselves soon became victims (3).

Opinion en-  
tertained of  
it by its  
authors.

It is a curious circumstance, illustrative of the tendency of revolutionary excitement to deprive the representatives of the people of any thing approaching to freedom of deliberation, that the authors of this celebrated declaration were, at the time they wrote it, sensible of the absurdity and peril of many of its parts. Dumont, its principal composer, has justly asked,—“Are men all equal? Where is the equality? Is it in virtue, talents, fortune, industry, situation? Are they free by nature? So far from it, they are born in a state of complete dependence on others, from which they are long of being emancipated (4).” Mirabeau himself was so sensible of the absurdity of laying down any code of rights anterior to the

(1) Lac. vii. 149. Th. i.

(2) The people of Versailles already insulted and pelted the nobles and clergy at the gate of the Assembly, whom they stigmatized as *Aristocrats*; an epithet which afterwards became the certain prelude to destruction. It is extraordinary, that the opposite party never affixed any denomination to the Revolutionists, but suffered them to assume the title of

“the Nation.” It may readily be imagined what an effect this name had in influencing the minds of men, already sufficiently inflamed from other causes. “Epithets and nicknames,” said Napoleon, “should never be despised; it is by such means that mankind are governed.” [Dumont, i. 72.]

(3) Mig. i. 82. Lac. vii. 153.

(4) Dum. 140. Th. i. 142.

formation of the constitution, that he laboured to induce the Assembly to postpone it till that was accomplished; observing, that "any enunciation of right at that time would be but an almanack for a year." But it was too late; the people would admit of no delay; and the deputies, afraid of losing their popularity, published the famous declaration, inwardly execrating the work of their own hands,—a step so perilous, that, as its author himself admits, it was like placing a powder-magazine under an edifice, which the first spark of fire would blow into the air (1).

Formation of a constitution. The great question which next occupied the Assembly was the formation of a constitution; and the discussions regarding it kept the public mind in a state of incessant agitation during the whole of August and September. The committee to whom it was referred to report on the subject, recommended the inviolability of the King's person, the permanence August 28. of the legislative body, and a single chamber for the legislature. This important question, upon which the future progress of the Revolution hinged, was warmly discussed in the clubs of the capital, and the most vehement threats held out to those of the Assembly who were suspected of leaning to the aristocratic side. On the one side, it was argued that the very idea of an assembly, composed of hereditary legislators, was absurd in a free country; that if it united itself to the throne, it became dangerous to freedom,—if to the people, subversive of tranquillity; that it would operate as a perpetual bar to improvement, and, by constantly opposing reasonable changes, maintain a continual discord between the higher and lower orders; and that the only way to prevent these evils was to blend the whole legislature into one body, and temper the energy of popular ambition by the firmness of aristocratic resistance. On the other hand, it was maintained that the constitution of society in all the European states, necessarily implied a separate body of nobles and commons; that the turbulent spirit of the one was fully counteracted by the tenacious tendency of the other; that a monarchy could not subsist without an upper house to support the throne; that the English constitution afforded decisive evidence of the happy effects of such a separation; that the best consequences had been found to follow the discussion of public matters in separate assemblies, and many fatal resolutions August 31. prevented by allowing time for consideration between their deliberations; and that it was a mere mockery to pretend that these restraints could take place, if the legislature was all contained in one chamber, when the nobles would be immediately outvoted (2), and the whole rights of the monarchy might be voted away in a single sitting. Unfortunately for France, these arguments did not prevail, and a single chamber was adopted by the Assembly (3). Nor is it surprising that this was done, for the evils of the aristocracy were pressing, and had been experienced—those of the democracy remote, and were only anticipated. The time soon came when experience taught the ruinous consequences of their decision, and the warmest friends of freedom unanimously adopted a division of the legislature; but it was then too late; the aristocracy was destroyed, the face of society changed, and there remained only the name of a House of Peers, without either their property, their influence, or public utility (4).

The proceedings of the Assembly in the formation of this constitution were so precipitate, that in the eyes of all reasonable men they prognosticated no

(1) Dumont, 140, 142.

(2) Th. i. 84.

(3) It was carried by a majority of 499 to 89.

No less than 122 members remained away, intimidated by the threats of the populace.

(4) Lac. vii. 159. Riv. 191. Th. i. 152, 154. Mig. i. 84. Dum. 158.

thing but ruin to the country. Meditation and thought there passed for nothing; every one seemed only desirous to gratify his own vanity by anticipating the notions of his rivals; every thing was done at the sword's point, as in a place taken by assault; every change pressed on at full gallop. No interval was allowed for reflection, no breathing time given to the passions. After having demolished every thing, they resolved to reconstruct the whole social edifice with the same breathless rapidity; and so extravagant was the opinion of the Assembly of its own powers, that it would willingly have charged itself with the formation of constitutions for all nations (1). In these monstrous pretensions and ruinous innovations, is to be found the remote but certain cause of all the blood and horrors of the Revolution (2).

Question of  
the veto.

The question of the veto, or of the royal sanction being required to validate the acts of the legislature, was next brought under discussion, and excited still more violent passions. One would have thought, from the anxiety manifested on the subject, that the whole liberty of France depended on its decision, and that the concession of this right to the throne would alone restore the ancient *régime*. The multitude, ever governed by words, imagined that the Assembly, which had done so much, would be left entirely at the mercy of the King if this power were conceded, and that any privilege left to the disposition of the court would soon become an anti-revolutionary engine. This was the first question since the Revolution in which the people took a vivid interest, and it may easily be conceived how extravagant were their ideas on the subject. They imagined that the veto was a monster which would devour all the powers they had acquired, and deliver them over, bound hand and foot, to the despotism of the throne. Those who supported the veto were instantly stigmatized as inclining to every species of tyranny. The people, without understanding even so much as that, imagined that it was a tax which it was necessary to abolish, or an enemy who should be hanged; and they loudly demanded that he should be suspended by the lamp-post. The clubs of the Palais-Royal took the most violent measures, and incessantly besieged the Assembly with menacing deputations; efforts were made to array the municipality in insurrection, and the multitude, armed since the 14th of July, began to give symptoms of revolt. Alarmed by such dangerous signs, the Ministry recommended concession to the King; and he himself preferred a conditional to an absolute veto. The Assembly, by a majority of two to one (3), decreed that the King should have a veto, but

(1) Dumout, 159, 160.

(2) The particulars of this constitution, which was soon swept away amidst the violence and insanity of subsequent times, are too complicated and prolix to be susceptible of enumeration in general history, but one vital part of the fabric is deserving of especial attention. By a fundamental article, France was divided into 83 departments: the primary assemblies, 8000 in number, which were to be convoked every two years to elect the legislature, consisted of 5,000,000 citizens: in addition to this there were established 48,000 municipal assemblies composed of 900,000 citizens; 547 district assemblies, and 83 departmental assemblies, for the management of the local concerns of the provinces. But the most dangerous part of this highly democratic constitution remained behind. Each of the primary assemblies named an elector for every hundred citizens, who constituted 83 assemblies of 600 persons each, making in all 50,000 for the whole kingdom, who remained permanently in possession of their functions for the two years that the legis-

lature sat. These 83 assemblies were invested with powers so considerable that they almost amounted to an establishment of so many separate republics, in one great federal union. They nominated, to the exclusion of the King, the whole local authorities, including the bishops and clergy, judges, both supreme and inferior, magistrates and functionaries of every description. They constituted, in short, a permanent political union, legally established in every department, elected by universal suffrage, and wielding within that department almost all the influence and authority of Government. The Legislative Assembly, which succeeded the Constituent, was chosen under this constitution, and when the nation had become habituated to the exercise of these powers. It is unnecessary to go further—that single article in the constitution, carried as it immediately was into practice, is sufficient to explain all the disasters and crimes of the Revolution.—See CALONNE, 360, 361, and Const. 1789, § 17.

(3) By a majority of 613 to 325.

that his power to decline sanctioning any legislative measure should not extend beyond two successive legislatures (1).

It is a remarkable fact, singularly illustrative of the rapid progress of revolutionary ideas, when the fever of innovation has once seized upon men's minds, that in all the instructions of the electors to the deputies, without exception, the absolute veto, as well as personal inviolability, had been conceded to the sovereign. A few weeks of agitation—the revolt of the 14th July—the Tennis Court oath—had overturned all these sober resolutions, and the crown was compelled to recede from a privilege which had been unanimously agreed to by the whole kingdom. The instructions in the cahiers, indeed, were most express against almost all the illegal acts and usurpations of the Assembly. They almost invariably secured to the sovereign all the essential prerogatives of the monarchy. They unanimously prescribed a monarchical government for France; that all laws should require the King's sanction to their validity; that he should have the unrestrained right of making peace or war, and appointing the judges; that private property should be inviolate (2); and by a great majority, that the rights, estates, and privileges of the clergy should be maintained. The new constitution, the abolition of the absolute veto, the spoliation of the church, were already a violation of these instructions in their most essential particulars: yet not a voice was raised, in France, to protest against those monstrous and unauthorized stretches on the part of the popular representatives: so intoxicating is the possession of power to mankind, and so little are they qualified to hear its seduction, even when the measures to which it leads are most opposed to preconceived ideas, or most at variance with established habits (3).

Mirabeau  
supports the  
crown in the  
debate.

On this occasion Mirabeau supported the crown, and argued strenuously in favour of the absolute veto. "Let us not," said he, "arm the sovereign against the legislature, by allowing a moment to exist in which he may become its involuntary instrument. The nation will find more real security in laws consented to by his chief, than in the revolution which would follow the loss of his power. When we have placed the crown in the hands of a particular family, it is in the last degree imprudent to awaken their alarms, by subjecting them to a control which they cannot resist; and the apprehensions of the depositary of the whole forces of the monarchy cannot be contemplated without the most serious apprehensions. I would rather live in Constantinople than in France, if laws could there be made without the royal sanction." Words of striking and prophetic import, which were then ill understood or angrily interpreted, but which were recollected with bitter and unavailing regret, when the course of events had proved their truth, and the most vehement of their revilers had perished from their neglect. Mounier and Lally Tollendal on this occasion, though members of the committee appointed to frame the constitution, were the leaders of the party who contended for the division of the chambers, the absolute veto, and the formation of the constitution on the model of that of England. They even contended for it after the King had, by Necker's advice, agreed to yield the point. After the vote was passed, they were so much dis-

(1) Th. i. 148, 153. Mig. i. 86, 87. Dom. 156.

(2) So strongly was this principle expressed in all the cahiers, that the Assembly, by act 17, of the constitution of 5th October, 1789, sanctioned it by a special clause in these terms: "Property of every sort being a sacred and inviolable right, no one can be deprived of it but on the ground of public

necessity, legally established and evidently requiring it, and on the condition of a full and ample indemnity."—See *Const.* 1789, act. 17; *Calonne*, 215.

(3) *Calonne*, 124, 125, 127, 214, 215, 304, 305, 319, 380. *Lac.* vii. 162.



concerted, that they withdrew from the committee on the constitution, and shortly after left the assembly (1).

Paris, mean-while, was experiencing the convulsions incident to a revolution; all ranks, broken loose from their restraints, were rioting in the exercise of newly acquired franchises. In France, as it has been well observed, the

love of liberty is founded chiefly on the love of power. Every body of men in the capital instantly commenced the exercise of these intoxicating rights; and the electors invariably assumed the government of their representatives. One hundred and eighty delegates, nominated by the districts, assumed a legislative power in the metropolis; but they were in their turn controlled by their constituents, who

without hesitation, annulled their decrees when not suited to their inclinations; and nothing was agreeable but what flattered their ambition. The

idea of ruling by commanding their delegates, speedily spread, and was too intoxicating not to be every where well received. All those

who were not legally vested with authority began to meet, and to give themselves importance by discussing public affairs; the soldiers had debates at the Oratoire, the tailors at the Colonnade, the hairdressers at the Champs-Élysées, the valets at the Louvre (2). Subsequent ages might smile at such proceedings, if woful experience had not demonstrated how fatal they are in their consequences, and how rapidly the minds of the lower orders become intoxicated by the enjoyment of powers which they are equally incapable of exercising with discretion, or abandoning without convulsions.

Mean-while, the finances of the kingdom, the embarrassments of which had first occasioned the convocation of the states-general,

were daily falling into a worse condition. The lower orders universally imagined that the Revolution was to liberate them from every species of impost; and, amidst the wreck of established authority, and the collision of self-constituted powers, they succeeded for some time in realizing their expectations. The collection of the revenue became every where difficult, in many places impossible, and the universal distrust which followed a period of general agitation occasioned a lamentable deficiency in the excise and customs. The public revenue of 1790 was above one-third less than that of 1789; in many places the taxes had almost wholly disappeared; payment of the salt tax, the most considerable of the indirect imposts, was every where refused; and the boasted credit of a revolutionary government was soon found to amount to nothing. Alarmed at a deficiency which he had no means of supplying, M. Necker made a full and candid statement of the finances to the Assembly, and concluded by demanding a loan 30,000,000 of francs. The falling off in the revenue was above 200,000,000 francs, or L.8,000,000 yearly. The Assembly in vain endeavoured to negotiate such an advance. Terror at the unsettled state of the kingdom, uncertainty of the future, prevented any of the capitalists from coming forward (3).

But this was not all: the demands on the Treasury were rising as rapidly as their receipts were falling: the usual effects of a revolution were experienced, an increase in the public expenditure, and a diminution to a most alarming extent of the public income. Not only were the forced purchases of grain by Government, and their sale at a reduced price, unavoidably increasing, but a large body of workmen, thrown out of employment, were maintained at the public expense, for whose support no less than 12,000 francs, or about 500*l.*,

(1) Th. i. 154. Lac. vii. 165.

(2) Mig. i. 85. Th. i. 111.

(3) Th. i. 159, 160. Dumé 188. Lac. vii. 170.  
Burke's Cons. Works, v. 406, 408.

was daily issued from the treasury in Paris alone. The King and Queen had sent the whole of their plate to be melted down at the Mint, but it proved an inadequate supply for the public necessities, and assuaged for but a short time the miseries of the poor. Finding this project ineffectual, the minister had the boldness to propose a contribution of a fourth of the income of each individual, and did not disguise that there was no other alternative, and that the rejection of the measure would lead to a stoppage of the pay of the army Sept. 24. and of the interest of the public debt. The proposal was coldly received by the Assembly; but Mirabeau, in a speech of unequalled power, supported it. "Two centuries of depredation and abuse," said he, "have created the gulf in which the kingdom is in peril of being lost. It must be filled up: take the list of the French proprietors, choose among them those whose fortune is adequate to supply the deficiency; let two thousand be sacrificed to the good of the whole. You recoil at the barbarous proposal; alas, do you not see that if you proclaim a bankruptcy, or what is the same thing, refuse this impost, you commit an action not less unjust, and still more destructive? Do you believe that the millions of men who will instantly be ruined by such a step, or by its necessary consequences, will allow you to enjoy the fruits of your villany? that, starving for food, they will suffer you to indulge in your detestable enjoyments? Shall we be the first to give to the world the example of an assembled people being wanting in public faith? Shall the first apostles of freedom sully their hands by an action, which will surpass in turpitude the most corrupted governments? The other day, on occasion of a ridiculous motion in the Palais-Royal, they exclaimed, 'Catiline is at the gates of Rome, and you deliberate!' With truth may it be said now, hideous bankruptcy is there; it threatens to consume yourselves, your honours, and your fortunes, and you deliberate!" Carried away by this reasoning, the Assembly voted the supply (1); but the relief to the treasury was inconsiderable, for the distracted state of the kingdom prevented it from being carried into execution.

Famine in Paris. But while the Assembly was occupied with these discussions, a still more pressing evil began to be felt in the capital. Famine, the natural consequence of the public convulsions—want of employment, the inevitable result of the suspension of credit—pressed severely upon the labouring classes. August 10 to 30. Mobs became frequent in the streets; the bakers' shops were surrounded by clamorous multitudes demanding food. The most extravagant reports were circulated by the press, and greedily swallowed by the populace, in regard to the causes of the distress. It was the aristocrats who caused the corn to be cut green; they paid the bakers to suspend their labours; they turned aside commerce; they threw the grain into the river; in a word, there was no absurdity or falsehood which they did not implicitly believe. The cry soon became universal, that the measures of the court were the cause of the public distress, and that the only way to provide for the subsistence of the people was to secure the person of the King. An attack upon the palace was openly discussed in the clubs, and recommended by the orators of the Palais-Royal; while the agitated state of the public mind, and the number of unemployed artisans who filled the streets, rendered it but too probable that these threats would speedily be carried into execution. Alarmed at these dangers, the court deemed it indispensable to provide for their own security, which hitherto depended entirely on the fidelity of four hundred of the Garde-du-Corps, who remained on guard at the palace. For

(1) *Lac.* vii. 178. *Th.* i. 159, 162.

this purpose, the regiment of Flanders, and some troops of horse, were brought to Versailles. The arrival of these troops renewed the alarm of the people; the King, at the head of 1500 soldiers, was supposed to be ready to fall upon the insurgent capital, containing a hundred thousand armed men, and it was alleged with more probability by the better informed, that the design of the court was to retire, with such of the troops as remained faithful, to Metz, where the Marquis de Bouillé, at the head of his army, was to join them, and there declare the States-General rebellious, and revert to the royal declaration of 20th June (1).

Banquet at Versailles, 1st October. The minds of the populace were in the highest state of excitation from these causes, when an accidental incident blew the train into an explosion. A public dinner, according to an old custom in the French army, was given upon their arrival, by the Garde-du-Corps, to the officers of the regiment of Flanders, and of the urban guard of Versailles. The banquet was held in the saloon of the opera, while the boxes were filled with illustrious spectators, and all the rank and elegance which still adhered to the court, graced the assembly by their presence. The enthusiasm of the moment, the recollection of the spot, formerly the scene of all the splendour of Versailles, the influence of assembled beauty,—all conspired to awaken the chivalrous feelings of the military; the health of the King was drunk with enthusiasm, and the wish loudly expressed that the royal family would show themselves to their devoted defenders. The officers of the Swiss, and of some other regiments, were admitted to the repast; and the King appeared, attended by the Queen, the Dauphin, and Madame Elizabeth. At this sight, the hall resounded with acclamations, and the monarch, unused to the expression of sincere attachment, was melted into tears. After the royal family retired, the musicians of the court struck up the pathetic and well-known air, “Oh! Richard, oh, my King, the world abandons you!” At these sounds, the officers drew their swords, and scaled the boxes, where they were received with enthusiasm by the ladies of the court, and decorated with white cockades by fair hands trembling with agitation (2).

Agitation in Paris at this news. The intelligence of this repast was speedily spread through Paris, magnified by credulity, and augmented by malignant ambition. It was universally credited the following morning at the Palais-Royal, in the clubs and market places, that the dragoons had sharpened their sabres, trampled under foot the tricolor cockade, and sworn to exterminate the Assembly and the people of Paris. The influence of the ladies of the court, and the distribution of the white or black cockades, was represented as particularly alarming, by those who had employed the seductions of the Palais-Royal to shake the allegiance of the French guards. Symptoms of insurrection speedily manifested themselves, the crowds continued to accumulate in the streets in an alarming manner, until at length, on the morning of the 5th, the revolt openly broke out. A young woman seized a drum, and traversed the streets, exclaiming, “Bread! bread!” She was speedily followed by a crowd, chiefly composed of females and boys, which rolled on till it reached the Hôtel-de-Ville, which was broken open, and pillaged of its arms. It was even with difficulty that the infuriated rabble were prevented from setting it on fire. In spite of all opposition, they broke into the belfry, and sounded the tocsin, which soon assembled the ardent and formidable bands of the Faubourgs. The cry immediately arose, raised by the agents of the Duke of

(1) Dumont, 178. Lac. vii. 184. Toul. i. 130. Mig. i. 87. Th. i. 164, 166.

(2) Mig. i. 89. Lac. vii. 185, 189. Toul. i. 132. Th. i. 167.

Orléans, "To Versailles!" and a motley multitude of drunken women and tumultuous men, armed and unarmed, set out in that direction. The national guard, which had assembled on the first appearance of disorder, impatiently demanded to follow; and although their commander, La Fayette, exerted his utmost influence to retain them, he was at length compelled to yield, and at seven o'clock, the whole armed force of Paris set out for Versailles. The French guard, which formed the centre of the national guard, openly declared their determination to seize the King, and exterminate the regiment of Flanders and the body guard, who had dared to insult the national colours. Hints were even thrown out that the monarch should be deposed, and the Duke of Orléans nominated lieutenant-general of the kingdom (1).

The partisans of this ambitious and wicked, but irresolute prince had important designs in view in fomenting this burst of popular fury, and directing it to the royal family at Versailles. Their object was to produce such consternation at the court as should induce the King, and all the royal family, to follow the example of the Count d'Artois, and leave the kingdom. The moment this was done, they intended to declare the throne vacant, and offer it, under the title of Lieutenant-General, to the Duke of Orléans. But the firmness of the King and his brother, afterwards Louis XVIII, who saw through the design, caused the plot to fail; and the multitude, who were to be the instruments in producing the alarm, but could not, of course, be let into the secret, rendered it totally abortive, by insisting, at the close of the tumult, that the King and royal family should be brought to Paris; the event of all others which the Orléans party most ardently desired to avoid (2).

State of the  
Assembly  
and the  
Court.

The minds of the members of the Assembly, and of the inhabitants of Versailles, though less violently excited, were in an alarming mood. The King had refused his sanction to the Declaration of the Rights of Man; and the Assembly, piqued at any obstacle to their sovereignty, were in sullen hostility. The Queen had been heard to express her delight at the banquet of the officers; and the assemblage of troops, joined to some hints dropped by the courtiers, led to a general belief that a movement of the seat of the Assembly, and of the court, to Tours or Mentz, was in contemplation. No, one, however, anticipated any immediate danger; the King was out at a hunting party, and the Assembly just breaking up, when the fore-runners of the disorderly multitude began to appear in the streets. At the first intelligence of the disturbance, the monarch returned with expedition to the town, where the appearance of things exhibited the most hideous features of a Revolution. The rails in front of the court-yard of the palace were closed, and the regiment of Flanders, the body guards, and the national guard of Versailles, drawn up within, facing the multitude; while, without, an immense crowd of armed men, national guards, and furious women, uttering seditious cries, and clamoring for bread, were assembled. The ferocious looks of the insurgents, their haggard countenances, and uplifted arms, bespoke but too plainly their savage intentions. Nothing was done to secure the safety of the royal family; though the Swiss guards lay at Ruel and Courbevoie, no attempt was made to bring them to the scene of danger. The commander of the troops, the Count d'Estaing, seemed to have lost that daring spirit which he had formerly evinced, and subsequently displayed on the scaffold (3).

The mob  
proceeded to  
Versailles.

The multitude soon broke into the hall of the Assembly; and that august

(1) Lac. vii. 189, 195, 199. Toul. i. 134. Mig. i. 90. Th. i. 170, 174.

(2) Memoirs of Louis XVIII, iv. 374.

(3) Mig. i. 91. Th. i. 168, 172. Lac. vii. 192, 204, 205.

And surround the palace.

body, for the first time, beheld themselves outraged by the popular passions which they had awakened. For above an hour they were insulted by the insolent rabble, who seated themselves on the benches, menaced some of the deputies with punishment, and commanded silence to others. "Lose no time," they exclaimed, "in satisfying us, or blood will soon begin to flow!" Maillard, the orator of the insurgents, openly denounced Mounier, Clermont-Tonnerre, and other courageous deputies, who had exposed the designs of the Orléans faction. In the gallery, a crowd of fishwomen were assembled, under the guidance of one virago with stentorian lungs, who called to the deputies familiarly by name, and insisted that their favourite Mirabeau should speak (1).

In the confusion on the outside, an officer of the guard struck with his sabre a Parisian soldier, who immediately discharged his musket at him; a general discharge of fire-arms from the guards ensued, which produced great consternation, but did little or no execution. The national guard of Versailles, aided by the multitude, followed them to their barracks, whither they had been ordered to retire, forced the gates, pillaged the rooms, and wounded some of the men. The court were in consternation, and the horses already harnessed to the carriages, to convey the royal family from the scene of danger; but the King, who was apprehensive that if he fled, the Duke of Orléans would be immediately declared lieutenant-general of the kingdom, refused to move. The mob soon penetrated into the royal apartments, as the guards were prohibited from offering any resistance, and were received with so much condescension and dignity by the King and Queen, that they forgot the purpose of their visit, and left the royal presence, exclaiming *Vive le Roi!* A heavy rain, which began to fall in the evening, cooled the ardour of the multitude, and, before nightfall, the arrival of La Fayette, with the national guard of Paris, restored some degree of order to the environs of the palace (2).

During these tumults, the King was distracted by the most cruel incertitude. Mounier conjured him to vanquish his scruples, and accept simply the articles of the constitution proposed by the Assembly; the Queen, to act boldly, and defend his kingdom. Two carriages, ready harnessed, were kept at the gate of the Orangerie, but the crowd discovered them, and assembled to prevent their departure; the King commanded the Count d'Estaing to disperse the mob at that point, but he declined, alleging that the thing was impossible; the King urged the Queen to depart, and take the royal family with her, but she declared that nothing should induce her, in such an extremity, to separate from her husband. "I know," she added, "that they seek my life; but I am the daughter of Maria-Theresa, and have learned not to fear death." Assailed by so many subjects of anxiety, the King at length resolved upon submission, and Mounier was authorized to announce to the Assembly his unqualified acceptance of the nineteen articles of the constitution already framed, and his adhesion to the declaration of the Rights of Man (3).

But matters were now arrived at that pass when these concessions could produce no effect. A multitude of drunken women had broken into the hall of the Assembly, lay extended on its benches, and one shameless amazon occupied the President's chair, and in derision was ringing his bell. The deputies in vain endeavoured to restore order; the debates were incessantly interrupted by cries of "Bread! bread!" and nothing but the authority of Mirabeau could procure silence even for the discussion of the measure of

(1) Dumont, 181, 182. Lac. vii. 208. Toul. i. 138.

(2) Memoirs of Louis XVIII, iv. 382. Toul. i. 138, 137. Mig. i. 92.

(3) Lac. vii. 215, 216, 219. Th. i. 176.

providing for the public subsistence. At three in the morning the sitting was broken up, and the hall left in possession of its unruly invaders (1).

La Fayette had an interview with the royal family, and assured them of the security of the palace. He added, that he was so well convinced of the pacific disposition of his army, and had so much confidence in the preservation of the public tranquillity, that he was resolved to retire to rest (2). Misled by these assurances, the Assembly dispersed and repaired to their several homes; and the King and Queen, overcome with fatigue, retired to their apartments. The external posts were intrusted to the troops commanded by La Fayette; the interior were still in the hands of the body guard of the King (3). Unfortunately for his reputation, and for the honour of France, General La Fayette followed their example, and repaired, for the remainder of the night, to a château at some distance from the palace, where he soon after fell asleep (4).

Nothing occurred to interrupt the public tranquillity from three till five in the morning; but the aspect of the populace presaged an approaching storm. Large groups of savage men and intoxicated women were seated round the watchfires in all the streets of Versailles, and relieved the tedium of a rainy night by singing revolutionary songs. In one of these circles their exasperation was such, that, seated on the corpse of one of the body guard, they devoured the flesh of his horse half-roasted in the flames, while a ring of frantic cannibals danced round the group. Every thing announced that they were determined to assuage their thirst for blood by some indiscriminate massacre.

The mob  
break into  
the palace.

At six o'clock, a furious mob surrounded the barracks of the body guard, broke them open, and pursued the flying inmates to the gates of the palace, where fifteen were seized and doomed to immediate execution. At the same time, another body besieged the avenues to the palace, and, finding a gate open, rushed in and speedily filled the staircases and vestibules of the royal apartments. Two of the body guard, posted at the head of the stair, made the most heroic resistance, and by their efforts gave time to the Queen to escape into the apartments of the King. The assassins rushed into her room a few minutes after she had left it, and, enraged at finding their victim escaped, pierced her bed with their bayonets (5). The whole interior of the palace was ransacked by the savage multitude; the splendour of ages was suddenly exposed to the indiscriminate gaze of the lowest of the people.

*Apparet domus intus, et atria longa patescunt :  
Apparent Priami et veterum penetralia regum :  
Armatusque vident stantes in limine primo.*

Almost  
murder the  
Queen.

But for the intrepid defence of the body guard, and the exertions of the Marquis de Vaudrueil, who succeeded in reviving in the French guards some sparks of their ancient loyalty, the King himself, and the whole royal family, would have fallen a prey to the assassins. They dragged the bodies of two of the body guard, who had been massacred, below the windows of the King, beheaded them, and carried the bloody heads in triumph upon the point of their pikes through the streets of Versailles (6).

At the first alarm General La Fayette, whose unfortunate absence from the scene of danger had produced such alarming effects, threw himself upon his

(1) Toul. i. 159.

(2) Riv. 300.

(3) Th. i. 178.

(4) Riv. 300. Mig. i. 93.

(5) Mig. i. 93. Lac. vii. 217, 232, 233. Th. i. 180. Riv. 305, 313.

(6) Lac. vii. 234, 237. Riv. 307. Mig. i. 93. Th. i. 180.

horse, and hastened to the spot. He made an impassioned harangue to the grenadiers of the guard, and succeeded in prevailing upon them to defend the captives. The fifteen prisoners were thus rescued from impending death; and, the King himself having come to the windows and demanded their lives from the multitude, they ultimately escaped. Three others, who had already the halter about their necks, and were on the point of being strangled, were saved by some of these brave men, who flew to their deliverance, exclaiming, "Let us save the body guard, as they saved us at Fontenoy (1)!" Amidst the fury of the multitude, and the atrocity of faction, it is pleasing to record, that in moments of extreme danger the ancient generosity of the French military character manifested itself on both sides of the contest.

Heroic conduct of the Queen.

The conduct of the Queen during these moments of alarm was worthy of the highest admiration. Notwithstanding the shots which were fired at the windows, she persisted in appearing at the balcony, to endeavour to obtain the pardon of the body guards, who were in peril from the exasperated multitude: when M. de Laluzerne endeavoured to place himself between her and the danger, she gently removed him, alleging that that was her post, and that the King could not afford to lose so faithful a servant. Shortly after, the crowd vociferously demanded that she should appear at the window; she came forth, accompanied with her children; twenty thousand voices immediately exclaimed, "Away with the children!" and the Queen, sending them in, reappeared alone, in presence of a mob from whom she expected instant death. The generous contempt of personal danger overcame the fury of the populace (2), and universal shouts of applause testified their sense of the reality of the peril which she had braved.

The leaders of the tumult now resolved to derive some advantage from their success, by removing the King and the royal family to Paris, where they would be entirely subjected to their control. Immediately the cry was raised among the populace, "Let us bring the King to Paris! it is the only way of securing bread to our children." La Fayette persuaded the King, as the only means of appeasing the tumult, to accede to the wishes of the people, and, accompanied by the King and Queen, appeared at the balcony of the palace, and gave that assurance to the multitude. The Assembly, informed of his determination, hastily passed a resolution, that it was inseparable from the King, and would accompany him to the capital. Thus, the democratical party, as the fruit of their violence, obtained the immense advantage of having both branches of the legislature transferred to a place where their own influence was irresistible (3).

The Royal Family come to Paris, October 8.

At noon the royal party set out for Paris; a hundred deputies of the Assembly accompanied their carriage. All their exertions, all the authority of M. La Fayette, were unable to prevent the people from carrying in the front of the procession the two heads of the privates of the body guard who had been decapitated under the windows of the palace. The remains of that gallant band, almost all wounded, and in the deepest dejection, followed the carriage; around it were cannon, dragged by the populace, bestrode by frantic women; from every side arose songs of triumph, mingled with revolutionary songs. "Here is the baker, his wife, and the little apprentice!" exclaimed the women, in derision at the King, the Queen, and the Dauphin. Loaves of bread, borne on the point of lances, every where appeared, to indicate the plenty which the return of the sovereign was ex-

(1) Lac. vii. 238. Riv. 309. Th. i. 180.

(2) Riv. 312. Lac. vii. 241. Th. i. 182.

(3) Mig. i. 94, 95. Riv. 31. Th. i. 182.

pected to confer upon the capital. The monarch, after a painful journey of seven hours, during which he was compelled to drink, drop by drop, the bitterest dregs in the cup of humiliation, entered Paris, a captive among his own subjects, and adorning the triumph of the most inveterate of his enemies. He was conducted to the Hôtel-de-Ville, and thence to the Tuileries, which thenceforward became his palace and his prison (1).

Vast changes introduced by the Assembly. Thus terminated the first era of the Revolution; a period more fruitful in great events than any which had occurred since the foundation of the monarchy. Just five months had elapsed since the meeting of the States-General, and during that time not only the power of the sovereign had been overthrown, but the very structure of society changed. Instead of an absolute government, had succeeded a turbulent democracy; instead of an obsequious nobility, a discontented legislature; instead of the pride of ancient, the insolence of newly-acquired power. The right to tithes, the most venerable institution of the Christian church; the feudal privileges, coeval with the first conquest of Gaul by the followers of Clovis; the immunities of corporations, purchased by the blood of infant freedom, had all perished. The principle of universal equality had been recognised; all authority admitted to flow from the people; and the right of insurrection numbered among the most sacred of the social duties. The power of the sovereign was destroyed; he had been insulted, and narrowly escaped being murdered, in his own palace, and was now a captive, surrounded by perils, in the midst of his capital. Changes which were hardly brought about in England since the time of Alfred, were effected in France in less than five months.

Their excessive rashness. Experience might well have taught the promoters of the French Revolution, that such excessive precipitation could lead to nothing but disastrous results. Nothing durable in nature is made but by the slowest degrees; the flowers of the summer are as ephemeral as the warmth which produces them; the oak, the growth of centuries, survives the maturity and the decay of empires. The dominion of Alexander, raised in a few years, perished within the lifetime of those who witnessed its birth; the Roman empire, formed in a succession of ages, endured a thousand years. It is in vain to suppose that the habits of a nation can be changed, and its character altered, by merely giving it new institutions. We cannot give to childhood the firmness of maturity, by putting on the dress of manhood.

It is no apology for the Constituent Assembly, to say that they committed no violence themselves; that their measures were in great part adopted from the purest philanthropy; that they were themselves the victims of the faction which disgraced the Revolution. In public men we expect not merely good intentions, but prudent conduct; it is no excuse to those who have done evil, to assert they did so that good might come of it. If we pull down with too much haste, we do as much mischief as if we retain with too much obstinacy: the virtuous should always recollect, that if they remove the half, the reckless will speedily destroy the whole.

Danger of sudden innovation. The danger of political changes arises not from their immediate, but their ultimate consequences; not from those who originate, but those who follow them up. Alterations once rashly commenced, cannot easily be stopped; the fever of innovation seizes the minds of the energetic part of mankind, and the prudent speedily become unable to stem the torrent. The prospect of gain rouses the ambitious and the reckless; they issue

(1) Mig. i. 95. Riv. 322, 323. Th. i. 182. Lac. vii. 248. Burke, v. 142.



from obscurity to share the spoil, and in the struggle rapidly acquire an ascendancy. They do so, because they are not restrained by the scruples which influence the good, nor by the apprehensions which paralyse the opulent. Having nothing to lose, they are indifferent as to the consequences of their actions; having no principles, they accommodate themselves to those of the most numerous and least worthy of the people. Revolutions are chiefly dangerous, because they bring such characters into public situations; the Constituent Assembly was chiefly blamable, because it pursued a course which roused them from every part of France.

They themselves were the first to experience the truth of these principles. In their haste to subdue the throne they raised the people, and speedily became subjected to the power they expected to govern. The victory of the 5th of October was not less over the legislature than the throne; brought to Paris without protection, they were at the mercy of the populace, and not less enthralled than the King in his prison. The ultimate consequence did not appear for some years; but the Reign of Terror flowed naturally from the publication of the Rights of Man, and the decimation of the Convention from the rashness of the Constituent Assembly.

Errors on both sides. Faults were committed on both sides; inexperience in the management of so unparalleled a convulsion may excuse them in the commencement of the French Revolution; but their consequences are not the less clearly marked for the instruction of future ages.

I. The government unquestionably erred in delaying too long the important step of redressing the grievances that were complained of. The declaration of Louis, on 23d June, removed all the real evils of France; it would have been hailed with transport at an earlier period, and the monarch who granted it, celebrated as a second Marcus Aurelius (1): coming as it did during a period of excitement, it rather betrayed weakness than inspired confidence. Conciliatory measures are admirable, if pursued by government before war is declared; they are ruinous, if attempted by a general on the eve of battle.

Imprudence of M. Necker. II. M. Necker as clearly erred in doubling the number of the *Tiers-État*; Napoléon ascribed to that ill-judged step all the subsequent horrors of the Revolution (2). By doing so, he rendered omnipotent a single interest in the commonwealth, and reduced the States-General, when assembled together, to a state of entire dependence on one of its branches. So great an accession of power to any body is at all times dangerous, but it becomes doubly so when that body is in a state of ferment, and ambitious to overleap the barriers of the other classes in the state. M. Necker was seduced into this step by the intoxicating prospect of a popular administration; he found his influence gone when the boon was conceded, and he was constrained to resist the increasing demands of the people.

III. When the fatal measure of doubling the commons was once adopted, it became indispensably necessary to maintain the separation of the Chambers. It was a mere mockery to expect the nobles and the clergy to keep their place in an Assembly where they were immediately outvoted by a majority of two to one. What would be the fate of England, if its three hundred peers were sent to contend, in moments of agitation, with six hundred popular representatives in the House of Commons? This point should never have been conceded; it is contrary to the constitution of every European government, and was attended with such disastrous consequences, that the

(1) *Batby*, i. 127. *Th.* i. 32.

(2) *Bour.* viii. 100.

National Convention itself was compelled in the end to re-establish the separation of the Chambers, and rescind that very Tennis Court Oath which at first excited such universal transports.

IV. The accession of the clergy to the Tiers-État was the immediate cause of the compulsory union of the Chambers; its first effect was the annihilation of the whole property of the church. The case was exactly the same in Scotland; the efforts of the clergy destroyed the Catholic hierarchy, and the barons instantly seized its whole property, and reduced the Protestant ministers to a state of beggary. Such is the progress of revolutions; the ambitious take advantage of the simplicity or enthusiasm of the good, and smile when they are expected to relinquish any part of the spoil which they have gained by their aid, and enjoy at their expense. Gratitude is never to be expected from public bodies; and none are more certain of destruction than those whose assistance first put the movement in motion, the instant they attempt to coerce its excesses.

V. Beyond all doubt, the revolt of the French guards was the most decisive event in the Revolution; it speedily drew after it the defection of the whole army. The treason of a single regiment, by shaking the confidence of the remainder in each other, produced the most fatal consequences. The French government, in this respect, grievously erred in intrusting the defence of the metropolis to a body of men constituted as the *Gardes Françaises* were; that is, constantly dwelling within its walls, intimate with its citizens, sharing its sentiments, and corrupted by its enjoyments. Like the Prætorian Guards, their proximity to the capital overawed its inhabitants, while their familiarity with its vices seduced their allegiance. No true spirit of patriotism animated their bosoms; they forgot not that they were soldiers to remember they were men; their oaths were broken amidst the fumes of intoxication, their loyalty perished amidst the embraces of courtesans.

VI. The position of the National Assembly, and the residence of the monarch, during its sitting, so near the capital, was a grievous error, of which both had ample cause to repent. Freedom of deliberation was out of the question in such a situation; at first, the deputies were carried away by the contagion of popular feeling; latterly, they were enslaved by the terror of popular violence. All the insurrections which established the Reign of Terror, the captivity of the King, the subjugation of the assembly, were owing to the perilous vicinity of Paris. If the great work of national reformation is to be successfully carried through, it must be in a remote or secure situation, where the applause and the violence of the multitude are equally removed, and the minds of men are not liable to be swayed by the flattery, or intimidated by the threats, of the people intrusted to their care.

VII. Long before the era at which we have now arrived, the period had come when it behoved the King, and all the friends either of constitutional order or real freedom, to have taken the course of intrepid resistance, or perished in the attempt. The forcible union of the legislature in a single chamber, the confiscation of the church estates, the formation of a highly democratic constitution, inconsistent with any thing like public order, and the refusal of the absolute veto in defiance of the cahiers from every part of France, were all acts of violence, from which nothing but the establishment of democratic tyranny was to be anticipated. But when, in addition to all this, the King was besieged by a furious mob in his own palace, when his apartments were ransacked, and his consort all but murdered by hired assassins, the rule of law as well as of authority was at an end: the hour had arrived to conquer or die. By resistance in that extremity, he at least had a

chance of rousing the better class of the nation to his and their own defence; but for the fatal emigration of the noblesse, he unquestionably would have done so. But to yield to such outrages, to submit to be led a captive amidst drunken mobs to his own palace, was to place his neck beneath the lowest of the populace, and prepare, in the unresisted ascendant of guilt, for all the sanguinary excesses which followed (1).

Fatal creation of revolutionary interests. But the most ruinous step of the Constituent Assembly, that which rendered all the others irreparable, was the great number of revolutionary interests which they created. By transferring political power into new and inexperienced hands, who valued the acquisition in proportion to their unfitness to exercise it; by creating a host of new proprietors, dependent upon the new system for their existence; by placing the armed and civil force entirely at the disposal of the populace, they founded lasting interests upon the fleeting fervour of the moment, and perpetuated the march of the Revolution, when the people would willingly have reverted to a monarchical government. The persons who had gained either power or property by these changes, it was soon found, would yield them up only to force; the individuals who would be endangered by a return to a legal system, strove to the utmost of their power to prevent it. The prodigious changes in property and political power, therefore, which the Constituent Assembly introduced, rendered the alternative of a revolution, or a bloody civil war, unavoidable; for though passion is fleeting, the interests which changes created by passion may have produced are lasting in their operation. The subsequent annals of the Revolution exhibited many occasions on which the people struggled hard to shake off the tyranny which it had created; none in which the gainers by its innovations did not do their utmost to prevent a return to a constitutional or legal government. This was the great cause of the difference between the subsequent progress of the French and the English Revolutions; the Long Parliament and Cromwell made no essential changes in the property or political franchises of Great Britain, and consequently, after the military usurper expired, no powerful revolutionary interests existed to resist a return to the old constitution. In France, before the Constituent Assembly had sat six months, they had rendered a total change of society unavoidable, because they had transferred to the multitude the influence or possessions of a great portion of the state.

The Constituent Assembly, if it has done nothing else, has at least bequeathed one important political lesson to mankind, which is, the vanity of the hope, that by conceding to the demands of a revolutionary party for an increase of political power, it is possible to put a stop to further encroachments. It is the nature of such a desire, as of every other vehement passion, to be insatiable; to feed on concessions and acquisitions; and become more powerful and dangerous in proportion as less remains for it to obtain. This truth was signally demonstrated by the history of this memorable Assembly. Concession there went on at the gallop; the rights of the King, the nobles, the clergy, the parliament, the corporations, the provinces, were abandoned as fast as they were attacked. Resistance was nowhere attempted; and yet the popular party incessantly rose in their demands. Democratic ambition was never so violent as when it had triumphed over every other authority in the state. The legislature, the leaders of the state, in vain strove to maintain their ascendancy by giving up every thing which their antagonists demanded; in proportion as they receded, their opponents

(1) Mounier, li. 90, 91.

advanced, and the party which had professed at first a desire only for a fair proportion of political influence, soon became indignant if the slightest opposition was made to its authority (1).

This extraordinary fact suggests an important conclusion in political science, which was first enunciated by Mr. Burke, but has, since his time, been abundantly verified by experience (2). This is, that there is a wide difference between popular convulsions which spring from real grievances, and those which arise merely from popular zeal or democratic ambition. There is a boundary to men's passions when they act from reason, resentment, or interest, but none when they are stimulated by imagination or ambition. Remove the grievances complained of, and when men act from the first motives, you go a great way towards quieting a commotion. But the good or bad conduct of a government, the protection men have enjoyed, or the oppression they have suffered under it, are of no sort of moment, when a faction, proceeding on speculative grounds, is thoroughly heated against its form. It is the combination of these two different principles, so opposite in nature and character, but yet co-operating at the moment in the same effect, which renders the management of a nation in such circumstances so extremely difficult; for the concessions and reforms which are the appropriate remedies for, and are best calculated to remove, the discontent arising from the real grievances, are precisely the steps most likely to rouse to the highest pitch the fervour springing from the imaginative passions.

The errors of the Constituent Assembly may all be traced to one source; the evils of despotism were recent, and had been experienced, those of democracy remote, and hitherto unfelt. No such excuse will remain for any subsequent legislature. If the French Revolution had done nothing else, it has conferred a lasting blessing on mankind by exposing the consequences of hasty innovation, and writing in characters of blood the horrors of anarchy on the page of history. Let us hope that the dreadful lesson has not been taught in vain; that a whole generation has not perished under the guillotine, or been crushed beneath the car of ambition, only to make way for a repetition of the errors by future ages; and that from the sanguinary annals of its suffering, the great truth may be learned, that true wisdom consists in repairing, not destroying, and that nothing can retard the march of freedom but the violence of its supporters.

(1) Burke's *Consid.*, v. 89.

(2) Burke, vi. 239.

## CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE REVOLT AT VERSAILLES TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

## ARGUMENT.

Dismissal of the Duke of Orléans—Retirement of Mounier and Lally Tollendal—Tumults in Paris—Trial and Execution of the Marquis de Favras—Division of France into Departments—Municipal Regulations—Elective Franchise—Vast Effect of these Changes—Confiscation of the Property of the Church—Issue of Assignats—Sale of Church Property—Its Effects on the Subdivision of Land—Vehement Resistance of the Clergy—Abolition of Titles of Honour—Judicial Establishment—Military Organization—General Establishment of National Guards and Armed Pikemen—Fête of 14th July, the Anniversary of the Storming of the Bastille—Accusation of the Duke of Orléans and Mirabeau—Necker's Fall—Change of Ministry—Revolt at Mentz and Sedan—M. de Bouillé—Ecclesiastical Oath—Its Ruinous Effects—Revolutionary Law of Inheritance—Clubs in Paris—Jacobins—Cordeliers—General Emigration—Discussion on a Law against the Emigrants—Mirabeau joins the Throne—His Death—Plans of the Court—Journey to Varennes—Arrest of the King, and his Return to Paris—First Origin of Republican Principles—Royal Authority suspended—Debate on the Impeachment of the King—Vigorous Measures of the Assembly—Revolt in the Champ-de-Mars—Victory of La Fayette.—Failure to follow up the step—Proposed modification of the Constitution—Self-denying Ordinance—The King nominally reinvested with his Power—Closing of the Assembly—Its immense Changes—General Reflections on its Errors and beneficial Measures.

"*SEMPER in civitate,*" says Sallust (1), "*quibus opes nullæ sunt, bonis invident, malos extollunt; vetera odere, nova exoptant, odio suarum rerum mutari omnia student; turba atque seditionibus sine cura aluntur; quoniam egestas facile habetur sine damno. Sed urbana plebes ea vero præceps ierat multis de causis; nam qui ubique probro atque petulantia maxime præstant, item alii per dedecora patrimonii amissis, postremo omnes quos flagitium aut facinus domo expulerat, hi Romam sicuti in sentinam confluerant*" (2)." The French Assembly experienced the truth of these principles in a remarkable manner, upon the removal of the seat of its deliberations to the metropolis. To the natural depravity of a great city, its population added the extraordinary corruption arising from the profligacy and irreligion of preceding reigns. Never were objects of such magnitude offered to the passions of a people so little accustomed to coerce them; never was flattery so intoxicating poured into the minds of men so little fitted to withstand it. The National Assembly, with a fatal precipitance, placed itself without any protection at the mercy of the most corrupted populace in Europe, at the period of their highest excitation.

The removal of the court to Paris produced immediate changes of importance in the contending parties. The Duke of Orléans was the first to decline. General La Fayette exerted himself to show that he was the secret author of the disturbances which had so nearly proved fatal to the royal family, and declared publicly that he possessed undoubted proofs

(1) Sallust, *Bellum Cat.* sec. 37.

(2) "In every country, those who have no property envy the good, extol the bad, deride antiquity, support in novation, desire change from the alarming state of their own affairs, live in mobs and tumults, since poverty has nothing to fear from such convulsions. But many causes made the city

populace pre-eminent in these respects; for whoever in the provinces was most remarkable for their depravity or self-sufficiency—all who had lost their patrimony, or their place in society—all whom wickedness or disgrace had driven from their homes, found their way to Rome as the common sewer of the republic."

of his accession to the tumult, with the design of making himself lieutenant-general of the kingdom. "The coward!" said Mirabeau, "he has the appetite for crime, but not the courage to execute it (1)." Even at the Palais-Royal his influence was lost, except with his hireling supporters; and the King, glad to get quit of so dangerous a subject, with the entire concurrence of the National Assembly, sent him into honourable exile on a mission to the court of London.

Retirement  
of Mounier  
and La Fayette  
Tollendal.

From this departure nothing but good was to be expected; but the secession of other members diminished the influence of reason in the Assembly. Mounier and Lally Tollendal, despairing of the cause of order, retired from the capital; and the former established himself in Dauphiny, his native province, where he endeavoured to organize an opposition to the Assembly (2). The departure of these virtuous patriots was a serious calamity to France; it weakened the friends of rational freedom, and by extending the fatal example of defection, left the country a prey to the ambitious men who were striving to raise themselves on the public calamities. They had expected that the people, after having delivered the Assembly on the 14th July, would immediately submit themselves to its authority; they were the first to find that popular commotions are more easily excited than regulated, and that the multitude will not shake off one authority merely to subject themselves to another. The heroes of the nation, on occasion of the Tennis Court oath, and the union of the orders, had already fallen into neglect; the Parliaments had been passed by them in the career of democracy, and they were already outstripped by their more ambitious inferiors (3).

Tumult in  
Paris.  
October 11.

The national guard of Paris, under the command of the intrepid La Fayette, who still fondly clung to the illusion that order could be preserved under democratic rule, for some time succeeded in re-establishing tranquillity in the capital. A baker, named François, was murdered in the streets on the 19th October, by a mob, who were enraged at finding that the return of the King had not immediately had the effect of lowering the price of provisions. With the savage temper of the times, they put his head on a pike, and paraded it through the streets, compelling every baker whom they met to kiss the remains. The wife of François, who was running in a state of distraction towards the Hôtel-de-Ville, met the crowd; at the sight of the bloody head, she fainted on the pavement: they had the barbarity to lower it into her arms, and press the lifeless lips against her face. Such unparalleled atrocity excited the indignation of all the better class of citizens; martial law was proclaimed, and La Fayette, putting himself at the head of the national guard, attacked the mob, and seized the ruffian who carried the head, who was executed next day. The indignant populace murmured at the severity: "What!" they exclaimed; "is this our liberty? We can no longer hang whom we please (4)!"

The Assembly, acting upon the impulse of the moment, passed a decree

(1) Toul. i. 152. Lac. vii. 259. Th. i. 184, 185, 186.

(2) The latter thus justified himself to one of his friends for retiring from public life.—"My health renders my continuance in the Assembly impossible; but laying that aside, I could no longer endure the horror occasioned by that blood, those heads, that Queen half-murdered, that King led a captive in the midst of assassins, and preceded by the heads of the unhappy guards who had died in his service; those murderers, those female cannibals, that infernal

cry, 'A la lanterne tous les évêques!' Mirabeau exclaiming that the vessel of the Revolution, far from being arrested in its course, would now advance with more rapidity than ever; these are the circumstances which have induced me to fly from that den of cannibals, where my voice can no longer be heard, and for six weeks I have strove in vain to raise it."—LACAYETTE, vii. 265, 266.

(3) Lac. vii. 255. Mig. i. 97. Th. i. 191.

(4) Toul. i. 168. Mig. i. 98. Th. i. 192. Lac. vii. 262.

against seditious assemblages, known by the name of the decree of *Martial Law*. It was enacted, that on occasion of any serious public disturbance, the municipality should hoist the red flag, and immediately every group of citizens should disperse, on pain of military execution (1). Mirabeau, Buzot, and Robespierre, vehemently opposed the measure; they felt the importance of such popular movements to aid their sanguinary designs.

October 23. But the people would not relinquish, without a struggle, the agreeable office of public executioners. Two robbers were seized by them, under pretence that the tribunals were too slow in executing justice, and hung upon the spot; a third was on the point of being strangled, when La Fayette arrived with his grenadiers, and inflicted a summary chastisement on those self-constituted authorities. Shortly after, he suppressed with equal vigour and courage a dangerous revolt of the Armed Guard of Paris, which was already beginning to form a nucleus to the disaffected. Yet, even at the time that he was daily exposing his life in his efforts to restore the force of the laws, he was proclaiming from the tribunal of the National Assembly the dangerous doctrine, that "when the people are oppressed, insurrection becomes the most sacred of duties (2)." How often do words, incautiously spoken, produce consequences, which life bravely exposed is unable to prevent!

Trial and execution of the Marquis de Favras. Dec. 25, 1790.

The Baron de Besenval, in whose favour M. Necker had so generously interfered, on his return to Paris, was shortly after tried before the High Court of Châtelet, and acquitted. In preparing for his defence, his counsel had urged him to make use of a document signed by the hand of the King, which authorized him to repel force by force. "God forbid," said he, "that I should purchase life by endangering so excellent a monarch (3)!" and tore the writing in pieces. The Marquis de Favras was shortly after brought before the same tribunal, and the indignation of the people at the former acquittal was such, that from the beginning of the trial his fate was certain. The crimes laid to his charge were of the most absurd and incredible description; that of having entered into a conspiracy to overturn the constitution; and it was unsupported by any adequate evidence; but he was condemned by a tribunal which was intimidated by a ferocious multitude, who never ceased exclaiming, even in the hall of justice, "A la lanterne! A la lanterne!" He was conducted at three in the morning, clothed in a white shirt, to the Place de Grève, where, with a torch in his hand, he read with a firm voice his sentence of death, protested his innocence, and died with heroic firmness; the first victim of judicial iniquity which the Revolution had produced (4).

He admitted having received 100 louis from a nobleman of high rank, but refused to divulge his name, and uniformly declared that he was no farther implicated in any conspiracy. The people assembled in vast crowds, and with savage joy, to witness his punishment, though it was conducted by torchlight; the unusual spectacle of a marquis being hanged, was a sensible proof of the equality in condition which the Revolution had occasioned; and, after it was over, they mingled in every street brutal jests, with innumerable parodies, of the mode of his execution (5).

The first legislative measure of the Assembly was directed against the rising jealousies of the provinces. These little states, proud of their ancient privileges, had beheld with regret the extinction of their rights and impor-

(1) Lac. vii. 263. Th. i. 192. Buzot, 174.

(2) Lac. vii. 267. 269.

(3) Lac. vii. 271.

(4) Lac. vii. 275. Th. i. 210.

(5) Th. i. 210, 211.

tance in the increasing sovereignty of the National Assembly, and were in some places taking measures to counteract its influence. To extinguish their designs, the kingdom was distributed into new divisions, called departments, which were nearly equal in extent and population. Eighty-four of these comprehended the whole kingdom of France; each department was divided into districts, and each district into cantons, which last usually embraced five or six parishes. A criminal tribunal was established for each department; a civil court for each district; a court of reference for each canton. Each department had a council of administration, consisting of thirty-six members, and an executive council, composed of five. The district had its council and directory organized in the same manner. The purpose of the canton was electoral—not executive; the citizens united there to elect their deputies and magistrates; the qualification for voting was a contribution of the amount of three days' labour. The deputies elected by the cantons were intrusted with the nomination of the representatives in the National Assembly, the administrators of the department, those of the district, and the judges in the courts of law (1).

Division of  
France into  
depart-  
ments.  
Jan. 9,  
1790.

Municipal  
Establish-  
ment.  
April 1790.

To secure still farther the control of the people, the judges were appointed only for three years; after which their appointment required to be renewed by the electors; a pernicious state of dependence, even more dangerous in a sovereign multitude than an arbitrary prince, inasmuch as the latter is permanent, and may find his interest or that of his family injured by deeds of injustice, whereas the former is perpetually fluctuating, and neither influenced by a feeling of responsibility, nor any durable interest in the consequences of its iniquity (2).

This decree arranged the rights and limits of the rural districts; another settled the powers and privileges of the inhabitants of towns. The administration of cities was intrusted to a general council, and a municipality, whose number were proportioned to the population of the towns. The municipal officers, or magistrates, were named directly by the people, and were alone authorized to require the assistance of the armed force (3).

Municipal  
regulations

The execution of these decrees was the most important step in the history of the Revolution. They were a practical application of the principle recognised in the "Rights of Man," that all sovereignty flows from the people. By this gigantic step, the whole civil force of the kingdom was placed at the disposal of the lower orders. By the nomination of the municipality, they had the government of the towns; by the command of the armed force, the control of the military; by the elections in the departments, the appointment of the deputies to the Assembly, the judges to the courts of law, the bishops to the church, the officers to the national guard; by the elections in the cantons, the nomination of magistrates and local representatives. Every thing thus, either directly, or by the intervention of a double election, flowed from the people; and the qualification for voting was so low, as practically to admit every able-bodied man: Forty-eight thousand communes, or municipalities, were thus erected in France, and exercised, concurrently and incessantly, the rights of sovereignty; hardly any appointment was left at the disposal of the crown. After so complete a democratical constitution, it is not surprising, that during all the subsequent changes of the Revolution (4), the popular party should have acquired so

Vast effects  
of these  
changes.

(1) Mig. i. 98, 99. Toul. i. 172. Th. i. 196.  
(2) Madame de Staël, *Rév. Franç.* i. 375.

(3) Mig. i. 99, 100. Th. i. 198.  
(4) Mig. i. 100. Th. i. 97, 100. Lac. vii. 330.



irresistible a power; and that, in almost every part of France, the persons in authority should be found supporting the multitude, upon whom they depended for their existence.

This great change, however, was not brought about without exciting the most violent local discontents. It shocked too many feelings, and subverted too many established interests, not to produce a general ferment. Divisions as ancient as the fall of the Roman Empire; parliaments coeval with the first dawn of freedom; prejudices nursed for centuries; barriers of nature incapable of removal; political aversions still in their vigour,—were all disregarded in the great act of democratic despotism. But the protests of the provinces, the resistance of the local parliaments, the clamour of the states, could neither deter nor arrest the National Assembly. A change greater than the Romans attempted in the zenith of their power, which the vigour of Peter, or the ambition of Alexander, never dared to contemplate, was successfully achieved by a popular assembly, a few months after their first establishment. A memorable proof of the force of public opinion, and the irresistible power of that new spring which general information, and the influence of the press, had now, for the first time, brought to bear on public affairs (1).

In parcelling out France into these arithmetical divisions, the Constituent Assembly treated it precisely as a conquered country. Its patriots realized for its free inhabitants, what the Roman historian laments as the last drop of bitterness in the cup of the vanquished (2). Acting as conquerors, they imitated the policy of the harshest of that cruel race. "The policy of such barbarous victors," says Mr. Burke, "who condemn a subdued people, and insult their inhabitants, ever has been to destroy all vestiges of the ancient country in religion, policy, laws, and manners, to confound all territorial limits, produce a general poverty, crush their nobles, princes, and pontiffs, to lay low every thing which lifted its head above the level, or which could serve to combine or rally, in their distresses, the disbanded people under the standard of old opinion. They have made France free in the manner which their ancient friends to the rights of mankind freed Greece, Macedon, Gaul, and other nations. If their present project of a Republic should fail, all securities to a moderate freedom fail along with it: they have levelled and crushed together all the orders which they found under the monarchy: all the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed, insomuch that if monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendancy in France, under *this or any other dynasty*, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered at setting out by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that ever appeared on earth (3)."

At the same time, the elective franchise was fixed at twenty-five years of age, and the contribution of a *marc* of money, or the value of three days' labour. No condition was annexed to the situation of representative, the choice of the people being held to supersede every other qualification. The election of members of the legislature took place by two degrees, the electors in the first instance, in their primary assemblies, choosing the delegates who

(1) Mig. i. 100. Lac. vii. 336, 337.

(2) Non ut olim universæ legiones deducebantur cum tribunis et centurionibus, et sui cujusque ordinis militibus, ut consensu et caritate rempublicam efficerent; sed ignoti inter se diversis mancipiis, sine rectore, sine affectibus mutuis, quasi ex alio genere mortalium repente in unum collecti

numerus magis quam colonia.—Tac. Ann. xiv. c. 27.

(3) Burke's *Consid. Works*, v. 328, 333. How surprising a foresight of what the course of time has developed, and is developing! When Mr. Burke wrote this in 1790, he was far ahead in political intelligence of ninety-nine hundredths of politicians half a century after.

were to appoint the legislators, and they in their turn selecting the deputies for the Assembly (1).

These two measures, the division of the kingdom into departments, and the prodigious degradation of the elective franchise, rapidly proved fatal to freedom in France. The latter brought up such a body of representatives in the next Assembly as overturned the throne, and induced the Reign of Terror, and the despotism of Napoléon; the former, by destroying the influence of the provinces, and concentrating the whole authority of the state in Paris, has left no power existing capable of withstanding the weight, whether in popular, monarchical, or military hands, of the capital. It was not thus in old France;—for sixteen years Paris was occupied by the English, and an English monarch crowned at Rheims; but the provinces resisted and saved the monarchy. The League long held the capital; but Henry IV., at the head of the forces of the provinces, reduced it to submission. But, since the separation of departments, the extinction of provincial courts and assemblies, and the concentration of all the authority of the state in the metropolis, every thing has come to depend on its determinations; the ruling power at the Tuileries has never failed to be obeyed from the Channel to the Pyrenees; and the subjection of France to the mobs of Paris has been greater than that of the Empire to the Prætorian bands (2).

The embarrassment of the finances next occupied the attention of the Assembly. All the measures taken for the relief of the public necessities since the convocation of the States-General had proved utterly unavailing. The

Confiscation  
of the Prop-  
erty of the  
church.

nation in truth was subsisting entirely on borrowed money; the revenue had almost every where failed, and the public debt had increased in the last three years by the enormous amount of 1,200,000,000 francs, or nearly L.50,000,000 sterling (3). Matters had at length reached a crisis; the capitalists, so long the ardent supporters of the Revolution, had become sensible of its tendency, and would not advance a shilling to the public service. The contribution of a fourth part of the revenue of every individual, granted to the eloquence of Mirabeau, had produced but a momentary relief; the confusion of public affairs rendered all ordinary sources of revenue unavailing, and some decisive measure had become indispensable, to fill up the immense deficit which the Revolution had produced. In this emergency, the property of the church was the first fund which presented itself, and it was sacrificed without mercy to the public necessities. Talleyrand, bishop of Autun, proposed that the ecclesiastical property should be devoted to the support of the ministers of religion, and the payment of the public debt. In support of this spoliation, he argued, that "the clergy were not proprietors, but depositaries of their estates; that no individual could maintain any right of property, or inheritance in them; that they were bestowed originally by the munificence of kings or nobles, and might now be resumed by the nation which had succeed to their rights." To this it was replied by the Abbé Maury, and Siéyes, "that it was an unfounded assertion that the property of the church was at the disposal of the state; it flowed from the munificence or piety of individuals in former ages, and was destined to a peculiar purpose, totally

(1) Th. i. 197.

(2) Vicomte St.-Chamans, sur la Révolution de 1830, 79, 82.

(3) Total debt in April, 1787, . . . . . 3,002,000,000 francs or L. 120,000,000  
In April, 1790, . . . . . 4,241,000,000 or 170,000,000

Increase, . . . . . 1,239,000,000 or L. 50,000,000  
—See CALONNE, 74.

different from secular concerns; that, if the purposes originally intended could not be carried into effect, it should revert to the heirs of the donors, but certainly could not accrue to the legislature; that this great measure of spoliation was the first step in revolutionary confiscation, and would soon be followed up by the seizure of property of every description; and that, in truth, it was a sacrifice of the provinces, and their estates, to the capitalists of the metropolis who held the public debt, and the vociferous mob who ruled the counsels of the Assembly." But it was all in vain. The property of the church was estimated at several thousand millions of francs; this appeared a fund sufficient to maintain the clergy, endow the hospitals for the poor, extinguish the public debt, and defray the expenses of the civil establishment. To a government overwhelmed with debt, the temptation was irresistible; and, in spite of the eloquence of the Abbé Maury, and the efforts of the clergy, it was decreed, by a great majority, that the ecclesiastical property should be put at the disposal of the nation. The funds thus acquired were enormous; the church lands were nearly one-half of the whole landed property of the kingdom (1).

The clergy were declared a burden upon the state, and thenceforward received their incomes from the public treasury. But the Assembly made a wretched provision for the support of Religion. The income of the Archbishop of Paris was fixed at L.2000 a-year (50,000 francs); that of the superior bishops at 25,000 francs, or L.1000 a-year; that of the inferior at L.750; that of the smallest at L.500 a-year. The curés of the larger parishes received 2000 francs, or L.80 a-year; 1500 francs, or L.60, in the middle-sized; and 1200 francs, or L.48, in the smallest. The incomes of the greater part of the clergy, especially the great beneficiaries, were, by this change, reduced to one-fifth of their former amount (2).

The arguments which prevailed with the Assembly were the same as those urged on similar occasions by all who endeavour to appropriate the property of public bodies. It is, no doubt, plausible to say, that religion, if really true, should be able to maintain itself; that the public will support those who best discharge its duties; and that no preference should be given to the professors of any peculiar species of faith. But experience has demonstrated that these arguments are fallacious, and that religion speedily falls into discredit in a country where its teachers are not only maintained, but amply maintained, at the public expense. The marked, and almost unaccountable irreligion of a large proportion of the French ever since the Revolution, is a sufficient proof that the support of property, and a certain portion of worldly splendour, is requisite to maintain even the cause of truth.

The reason is apparent; worldly enjoyments are all agreeable in the outset, and only painful in the end. Religious truth is unpalatable at first, and its salutary effects are only experienced after the lapse of time; hence, the first may be safely intrusted to the inclinations or taste of individuals; the last require the support or direction of the state. If individuals are left to choose for themselves, they will select the best architects or workmen; but it does by no means follow that they will pitch upon the best religious guides. The ardent will follow, not the most reasonable; but the most captivating; the selfish, or indifferent, the most accommodating; the wicked, none at all. Those who most require reformation will be the last to seek it. An established church, and ecclesiastical property, are required to relieve the teachers of

(1) Mig. i. 104. . Toul. i. 170. Th. i. 193, 194.  
Chateaubriand: Etud. Hist. iii. 284.

(2) Lac. viii. 24. Th. i. 195.

religion from the necessity of bending to the views, or sharing the fanaticism of the age. Those who live by the support of the public will never be backward in conforming to its inclinations. When children may be allowed to select the medicines they are to take in sickness, or the young the education which is to fit them for the world, the clergy may be left to the support of the public, but not till then.

Leads to the issuing of assignats. This violent measure led to another, attended by consequences still more disastrous. The necessities of the state required the sale of ecclesiastical property to the amount of 400,000,000 of livres, or L.16,000,000 sterling; to facilitate it, the municipality of Paris, and of the principal cities of the kingdom, became the purchasers in the first instance, trusting to reimbursement by the sale of the property, in smaller portions, to individuals (1). But an insuperable difficulty arose in finding money sufficient to discharge the price of so extensive a purchase before the secondary sales were effected; to accomplish this, the expedient was adopted of issuing promissory notes of the municipality to the public creditors, which might pass current till the period of their payment arrived. This was immediately done; but when they became due, still no means of discharging them existed; and recourse was had to government bills, which might possess a legal circulation, and pass for money, from one end of the kingdom to the other. Thus arose the system of ASSIGNATS, the source of more public strength, and private suffering, than any other measure in the Revolution.

Sale of part of the church property, March 17, 1790. By a decree of the Assembly, government were authorized to issue assignats to the extent of 170,000,000 francs, or about L.7,000,000 sterling, to be secured on the domains of the crown, and the ecclesiastical property, of the value of 400,000,000 francs. Thus was the public hand for the first time laid on private property, and the dangerous benefit experienced of discharging obligations, without providing funds at the moment for their liquidation; an expedient fostering to industry, and creative of strength in the first instance, but ruinous to both in the end, if not accompanied by prudent management, and based on the provision for ultimate payment (2).

Leads to the subdivision of Land. By this means, the alienation of the ecclesiastical property was rendered irrevocable, and the foundation of a paper circulation laid in the kingdom. The necessities of the state made the continuance and extension of the system in future years unavoidable; and this led to a third consequence, more important in the end than either of the former, viz., the establishment of a vast body of small landholders, whose properties had sprung out of the Revolution, and whose interests were identified with its continuance. The public creditor was not compelled in the first instance to accept land instead of money, but he received assignats, which passed current in the market, and ultimately came into the hands of some prudent individual, who made them the investment of a little capital, and, instead of circulating them as money, presented them for discharge, and received a small fragment of the ecclesiastical estates. The extreme difficulty of finding a secure investment for capital, in those distracted times, and the innumerable bankruptcies of mercantile men which took place during the progress of the Revolution, produced an universal opinion among the labouring classes

(1) Mig. i. 205. Th. i. 233, 234.

(2) Th. i. 234, 235.

It is a remarkable fact, that this irrevocable step was taken by the Assembly in direct opposition to the opinions of the country. Out of thirty-seven addresses from the principal commercial cities of

France, only seven were in favour of assignats. The clamour of demagogues, the passion for spoliation and financial necessity, had already overturned the whole influence of property, whether landed or commercial.—See CALONNE, 82.

that the purchase of land was the only safe way of disposing of money; and this feeling, coupled with the excessive depreciation which the assignats afterwards reached, and the great accession to the national domains which the confiscated estates of the nobles produced, occasioned that universal division of landed property, which forms the most striking feature in the modern condition of France (1).

The clergy, finding the administration of a large portion of their estates transferred to the municipalities, and a paper money created, which was to be paid from their sale, were seized with the most violent apprehensions. As a last resource, they offered to lend the state the 400,000,000 francs, upon being re-invested with their property; but this offer, as tending to throw doubt upon the confiscation of their estates, was immediately rejected. The utmost efforts were immediately made by the church to excite public opinion against the Revolution. The pulpits resounded with declamations against the Assembly; and the sale of the ecclesiastical estates was universally represented as sacrilegious in the highest degree. But their efforts were in vain. Some disturbances broke out in the south of France, and blood was shed in many of the provinces in defence of the priesthood, but no general or national movement took place, and after some resistance, they were every where dispossessed of their estates. The irreligious spirit of the age secured this triumph to the enemies of the Christian faith; but no violent or unjustifiable proceeding can take place without ultimately recoiling on the nation which commits it. From this flagrant act of injustice may be dated the strong and unconquerable aversion of the clergy in France to the Revolution, and the marked disregard of religious observances which has since distinguished so large a portion of its inhabitants (2). From this may be dated that dissolution of private manners which extended with such rapidity during its progress, which has spread the vices of the old noblesse through all the inferior classes of the state, and threatens, in its ultimate effects, to counterbalance all the advantages of the Revolution, by poisoning the fountains of domestic virtue, from which public prosperity must spring. From this, lastly, may be dated the commencement of the fatal system of assignats, which precipitated and rendered irrevocable the march of the Revolution, and ultimately involved in ruin all the classes who participated in this first deed of unpardonable iniquity.

The only way in which it is possible to avoid these dreadful calamities, which at once dry up all the sources of national prosperity, is to assume it as a fundamental principle, that the estates set apart for the church are private property, not to be encroached or impaired, without the same violence which sets aside all private rights. Without that safeguard the church will inevitably fall a prey to financial embarrassments. Having no bayonets in their hands, like the army; having lost the spiritual thunder which maintained their authority in the ages of superstition; speaking to the future, not the present wants of mankind; they will ever be the first to be sacrificed to the financial embarrassments incident to an advanced state of civilisation, if not protected by the shield of an interest common to them with ordinary proprietors. It is to the firm hold which this principle has of the English nation, that Mr. Burke ascribes the long duration and extensive usefulness of its national establishment. "The people of England," says he, "never have suffered, and never will suffer, the fixed estate of the church to be converted into a pension, to

(1) Baron de Staël, 72. Mig. i. 106. Toul. i. 179.

(2) Mig. i. 106, 107. Lac. vii. 290, 291. Th. i. 199, 211, 236.

depend on the Treasury, and to be delayed, withheld, or perhaps extinguished by fiscal difficulties, which may sometimes be pretended for political purposes, and are in fact often brought about by the extravagance, negligence, and rapacity of politicians. They will not turn their independent clergy into ecclesiastical pensioners. They tremble for their liberty from the influence of a clergy dependent on the crown—they tremble for the public tranquillity from the disorders of a factious clergy, if they were made to depend on any other than the crown. For the consolation of the feeble and the instruction of the ignorant, they have identified the estate of the church with the mass of private property of which the state is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but only the guardian and regulator—they have ordained that the provision of this establishment should be as stable as the earth on which it stands, and not fluctuate with the oscillations of funds and actions (1)."

New modelling of the church. The interior organization of the church next underwent the revision of the Assembly. The bishoprics were reduced to the same number as the departments; the clergy and bishops declared capable of being chosen only by the electors who were intrusted with the nomination of deputies; the chapters suppressed, and the regular orders replaced by parochial clergy. In these reforms, if we except the election of the clergy and bishops by the people, for which they were manifestly disqualified, and which is utterly inconsistent with a national establishment, nothing flagrantly unjust was attempted; the church, purified of its corruptions, and freed from its splendid but invidious appendages, might still have maintained its respectability, had no spoliation of its possessions previously taken place. But the progress of the Revolution, and the efforts of more audacious reformers, soon completed its destruction (2).

Efforts of the clergy to dissolve the Assembly. May, 1790. The revolutionary party having now declared open war against the church, its partisans exerted themselves to the utmost to abridge the duration or operations of the Assembly. The moment was favourable, as the period when the powers of the Assembly should expire had arrived; the deputies were only appointed for a year, and that time had now elapsed. The clergy and aristocratical party took advantage of that circumstance to insist that the Assembly should be dissolved and reappointed by the electors; to support that proposal, they urged the sovereignty of the people, so recently proclaimed as the basis of government by the popular leaders. "Without doubt," says Chaplin, "sovereignty resides in the people; but that principle has no application in the present instance. The dissolution of the Assembly, before the work of the constitution is finished, would lead to its destruction; it is now urged by the enemies of freedom, with no other view but to occasion the revival of despotism, of feudal privileges, court prodigality, and all the countless evils which follow in its train."—"We deceive ourselves," replied the abbé Maury, "when we speak of perpetuating our own power. When did we become a National Assembly? Has the oath of 20th June absolved us from that which we took to our constituents? The constitution is finished; you have nothing now to do but to declare that the King possesses the executive power; we are sent here for no other purpose but to secure the influence of the people upon the legislature, and prevent the imposition of taxes without their consent. Our duties being now discharged, I strenuously resist every decree which shall trench upon the rights of the electors. The founders of liberty should be the last to invade the rights of others; we undermine our own authority, when we trench upon the pri-

(1) Burke's *Consid. Works*, v. 191, 192.(2) *Mig. i.* 107, 108. *Th. i.* 240.

vileges of those by whom it was conferred." Loud applauses followed these energetic words; but Mirabeau immediately ascended the tribune. "We are asked," said he, "when our powers began; I reply, from the moment when, finding our place of assembly surrounded by bayonets, we swore rather to perish than abandon our duties towards the nation. Our powers have, since that great event, undergone a total change; whatever we have done has been sanctioned by the unanimous consent of the nation. You all remember the saying of the ancient patriot, who had neglected legal forms to save his country. Summoned by a factious opposition to answer for his infraction of the laws, he replied, 'I swear that I have saved my country.' Gentlemen, I swear that you have saved France." The Assembly, electrified by this appeal, rose by a spontaneous movement, and declared its sitting permanent till the formation of the constitution was completed (1).

Abolition of titles of honour.  
June 30, 1790. In the fervour of innovation, titles of honour could not long be maintained. Lameth proposed a simple decree, "That the titles of duke, count, marquis, viscount, baron, and chevalier, should be suppressed." The noblesse and the clergy made vain efforts to prevent the sacrifice; it was carried by an overwhelming majority (2). Thus, in one day fell the ancient and venerable fabric of feudal nobility; an institution, sprung from conquest, and cradled in pride, but productive of great and important consequences on the social body, and the cause of the great distinction between European and Asiatic civilisation. The conquests of the East have seldom produced any lasting institutions, because they have always depended on a single race of warriors, and left behind neither honours nor hereditary possessions to perpetuate the fabric of society. Hence, every thing has been ephemeral in their dynasties; national glory, public prosperity, have in every age been as short-lived as their original founders. In Europe, on the other hand, the establishment of hereditary dignities, and of the right of primogeniture, has perpetuated the influence of the first leaders of the people; and by creating a class whose interests were permanent, has given a degree of durability to human institutions, unknown in any other age or quarter of the globe. Whatever may be said of the vanity of titles, and the unworthy hands into which they frequently descend, it cannot be denied that they have stamped its peculiar character upon European civilisation; that they created the body of nobility who upheld the fabric of society through the stormy periods of anarchy and barbarism, and laid the first foundation of freedom, by forming a class governed by lasting interests, and capable, in every age, of withstanding the efforts of despotic power. Whether the necessity of such a class is now superseded by the extension of knowledge and the more equal diffusion of property, and whether a system of tempered liberty can subsist without an intermediate body interposed between the power of the crown and the ambition of the people, are questions which time alone can resolve, but on which the leaders of the French Revolution had unquestionably no materials to form an opinion.

June 10, 1790.  
Settlement on the Crown. The Assembly acted with liberality towards the crown. Louis demanded twenty-five millions of francs (L.1,000,000 sterling) annually for his household expenses and civil list, which was instantly granted; and the jointure of the Queen was fixed at four millions of francs, or L.180,000 a-year. A conceding monarch is always, for a brief space, a favourite with a democratic legislature (3).

(1) Mig. i. 109, 111. Th. i. 218. Ferrière's Mémoires, i. 237.

(2) Lac. vii. 356, 357. Mig. i. 114.

(3) Lac. viii. 48. Th. i. 238.

Judicial  
estab-  
lish-  
ment.  
May 4,  
1790.

The judicial establishment underwent a total change about the same period. The parliaments of the provinces were suppressed. The work of destruction had now become so common, that the annihilation of these ancient courts, coeval with the monarchy, hardly excited any attention. New tribunals were created throughout the whole country on the most democratical basis; the judges were appointed, not by the crown, but the electors; that is, by the whole labouring classes. Even the power of pardon was taken from the sovereign. Trial by jury was universally introduced, and the jurymen taken indiscriminately from all classes of citizens. Reforms of the most salutary description were effected in the criminal courts; trials made public, the accused allowed counsel, and indulged with every facility for their defence. The inhuman punishments which disgraced the ancient monarchy were abolished, and the punishment of death limited to a smaller class of delinquencies. The cognizance of charges of high treason was intrusted to a supreme court at Orléans; but it must be added, to the glory of the National Assembly, that during their continuance not one trial took place. A new tribunal, entitled the Court of Cassation, was established at Paris to revise the sentences of inferior tribunals; the utility of that institution was such, that it has been continued through all the subsequent changes of government (1).

Military or-  
ganization.

But all these changes, great and important as they were, yielded in importance to the military organization which at this period took place throughout all France. The progress of the Revolution, the overthrow of the invading armies, the subjugation of the European powers, were mainly owing to the military establishments which sprung up during the first fervour of patriotic exertion. The army of France, under the old government, partook of the aristocratic spirit of the age; the higher grades of military rank were exclusively reserved for the court nobility, and even ordinary commissions bestowed only on those whose birth or connexions united them to the favoured class of landed proprietors. The consequences of such an exclusive system, in an age of advancing civilisation, might easily have been anticipated; the privates and non-commissioned officers had no common interest with their superiors, and, like the parochial clergy, felt their own inclinations coincide with those of the *Tiers-État*. Hence the rapid and decisive defection of the whole army, the moment that they were brought into collision with the Revolution, and exposed to the contagion of popular enthusiasm (2). Injudicious changes in the regulation of the household troops had recently introduced extensive dissatisfaction even amongst that favoured body, and occasioned the revolt of the Guards, which was the immediate cause of the fall of the royal authority.

The difficulties experienced by the military in all contests with the populace at this time were so great, that they practically amounted to an entire suspension of the authority of government. The duties of a municipal officer, or of the commander of a fortress, were more appalling than those arising from the most formidable force of regular enemies. In most places, the troops, seized with the same mutinous spirit as the nation, refused to act against the insurgents, or openly ranged themselves on their side. A handful of mutineers, a despicable rabble, were thus sufficient to make the governor of a citadel tremble; every act of vigour, even in self-defence, came to be considered as a capital crime; and the clamours of the populace were regarded with more alarm than the thunder of the enemy's artillery. Mirabeau

(1) Lac. vii. 344, 346. Th. i. 238.

(2) Toul. i. 124, 126, 127.



became fully sensible, when it was too late, of the ruinous consequences of such a distracted state of things, and proposed to remedy it by the proclamation of martial law; but the Assembly, terrified of offending the nation, did not venture to adopt so vigorous a step (1).

General  
establish-  
ment of  
National  
Guards.

Shortly after the taking of the Bastille, a new oath was tendered to the soldiers, which bound them never to employ their arms against their fellow-citizens, but on the requisition of the civil authorities. This circumstance, immaterial in itself, became important in its consequences, by accustoming the military to other duties; and the protection of other interests, than those of the sovereign. At the same period the national guards were organized, in imitation of Paris, over the whole kingdom; the middling classes, every where attached to the Revolution, because it promised to relieve the disabilities under which they laboured, formed the strength of its battalions; and in a few months three hundred thousand men, enrolled and disciplined in the provinces, were ready to support the popular cause. The influence of this immense body of armed men, great in itself, was increased by the democratic constitution under which it was constructed. Formed in a moment of revolution, and during the abeyance of the royal authority, it received no regular organization from any superior power; the privates elected their own officers, and learned the rudiments of discipline from instructors of their own selection; and these, chosen during a period of extraordinary excitation, were of course the most vehement supporters of the power of the people. Hence the marked and steady adherence of this influential body, through all the changes of the Revolution, to the popular side; and hence the facility with which regular armies were subsequently formed on the same democratic model on the first call of national danger (2).

The national guard of Paris, 30,000 strong, under the command of La Fayette, was capable of being increased, by beat of drum, to double the number, all in the highest state of discipline and equipment. But, as usually happens, where officers owe their appointment to the privates, his authority disappeared when his commands ran counter to the wishes of his inferiors (3). On one occasion he resigned the command, and entered an evening party in the dress of the privates. "What, general!" exclaimed the

(1) Dumont, 202. M. De la Tour du Pin, Minister of War, on the 4th June, 1790, gave the following account, in a Report to the Assembly, of the disorders of the army—"His Majesty has this day sent me to apprise you of the multiplied disorders of which every day he receives the most distressing intelligence. The army is threatened with ultra anarchy. Entire regiments have dared to violate at once the respect due to the laws, to the order established by your decrees, and to the oaths which they have taken with the most awful solemnity. Whilst you are indefatigable in moulding the empire into one coherent and consistent body, the administration of the army exhibits nothing but disturbance and confusion. The bonds of discipline are relaxed or broken, the most unheard-of pretensions avowed without disguise, the ordinances without force, the chiefs without authority; the military chest and the colours carried off; the authority of the King himself proudly defied; the officers despised, degraded, threatened, driven away, or prisoners in the midst of their corps, dragging on a precarious life in the bosom of disgust and humiliation... To fill up the measures of all these horrors, the commandants of places have had their throats cut, under the eyes and almost in the arms of their own soldiers!

"These evils are great, but they are neither the only nor the worst produced by such military insurrections. Sooner or later they menace the nation itself. The nature of things requires that the army should never act but as an instrument. The moment that, erecting itself into a deliberative body, it shall act according to its own resolutions, the government, be it what it may, will immediately degenerate into a military despotism; a species of monster which has always ended by devouring those who have produced it."—See Report quoted by BURKE, *Cons. Works*, v. 377.

"So far, however, was the King from listening to this sound advice, that, under the influence of his superstitious dread of occasioning the shedding of blood, he sent round circulars to all the regiments of the army, with orders that the soldiers should join several clubs and confederations in the different municipalities, and mix with them in their feasts and civil entertainments. "Sa Majesté a pensé qu'il convenoit que chaque régiment prit part à ces fêtes civiles, pour multiplier les rapports et resserrer les liens entre les citoyens et les troupes."—*Ibid.* v. 382.

(2) Toul. i. 86, 126, 127.

(3) Toul. i. 127.

guests; "we thought you were commander of the national guard."—"Oh!" said he; "I was tired of obeying, and therefore entered the ranks of the privates (1)."

And of armed pikemen—A more formidable force consisted in a multitude of artisans and manufacturers in all the great towns, armed with pikes, and trained to a certain degree of military discipline. These tumultuous bands, raised in moments of alarm, were always ready for insurrection, and anxious to share in the plunder of the opulent classes. Having nothing to lose themselves, they supported every measure of spoliation and cruelty. The worst of the popular leaders found in them a never-failing support, when the more measured fervour of the national guard was beginning to decline. Their numbers in Paris alone amounted to above 50,000; and their power, always great, received an undue preponderance from the disastrous gift of two pieces of cannon to each of the forty-eight sections, shortly after the capture of the Bastille. These guns were worked by the ablest and most determined of the populace; the higher ranks all shunned that service from the fatigue with which it was attended; it fell into the hands of the most ardent of the lower, and, from their terrible energy, these cannoniers soon acquired a dreadful celebrity in all the bloodiest tragedies of the Revolution (2).

Dreadful depreciation of assignats.—The agitation of the public mind was shortly increased by the convulsions which the paper circulation of the country underwent, and the multitudes whom its progressive depreciation reduced to a state of June 17, 1790. beggary. Government having once experienced the relief from immediate pressure, which paper credit never fails in the first instance to afford, speedily returned to the expedient; and fresh issues of assignats, secured upon the church property, appeared upon every successive crisis of finance (3). Eight hundred millions of fresh assignats were issued, notwithstanding the warning voice of Talleyrand (4), at the instigation of Mirabeau, who clearly perceived what a body of revolutionary interests and proprietors it would soon create.

These documents at first bore interest at the rate of four per cent; but this was soon discontinued; notwithstanding which, they for some time maintained their value on a par with the metallic currency. By degrees, however, the increasing issue of paper produced its usual effects on public credit; the value of money fell, while that of every other article rose in a high proportion; and at length the excessive inundation of fictitious currency spread a panic through the public mind, and its value rapidly sunk to a mere nominal sum. Eight or nine per cent was all that could be got, after some years, for these dangerous documents; and in many cases they would hardly pass for one-fifteenth of their legal value. So prodigious a change in the state of the circulating medium, occasioned an extraordinary fluctuation in the fortunes

(1) The author received this anecdote from his late illustrious and revered friend Professor Dugald Stewart, who was present on the occasion.

(2) Lac. vii. 357.

(3) Toul. i. 204. Th. i. 256, 257.

(4) M. Talleyrand clearly predicted the fatal consequences which would result from this continued issue of assignats to meet the wants of the treasury. "You ask," said he, "why should that paper money be always below the value of the metallic currency? It is because distrust will always exist as to the proportion between its amount and the national domains on which it is secured; because for long their sales will be uncertain; because it is dif-

ficult to conceive when two thousand millions (L. 80,000,000), the value of these domains, will be extinguished; because silver issuing at par with paper, both will become objects of merchandise; and the more plentiful any merchandise becomes, the more it must decline in price. From this must necessarily result an inextricable confusion; the purchase of land for a nominal value; the discharge of debts for illusory payment; and, in a word, an universal change of property, by a system of speculation so secret, that no one can perceive from whence the stroke that ruins him has come." [Th. i. 383, 385. *Pièces Just.*]

of individuals, and augmented to an incredible degree the number of those who were ruined by the public convulsions. But it extended in a proportional measure its ramifications through society, by swelling the number of the holders of national property, and enlisting a large and influential class, by the strong bond of interest, on the side of the Revolution (1).

<sup>Fête on the  
14th July.</sup> The 14th July, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, approached, and the patriots resolved to signalize it, by a fête worthy of the birth of freedom in the greatest of the European states. A confederation of the whole kingdom in the Champ-de-Mars was resolved on; and there the King, the deputies of the eighty-four departments, the Assembly, and the National Guard, were to take the oath to the constitution. Every exertion was made to render the ceremony imposing. For several weeks before, almost the whole labouring population of Paris was employed in constructing benches in the form of a theatre, for the innumerable spectators who were expected, while the municipality, the national guard, and the deputies of the departments, vied with each other in their endeavours to signalize their appearance on the stage by the utmost possible magnificence. The presence of the Monarch, of the National Assembly, of a hundred thousand armed men, and above four hundred thousand spectators, it was justly supposed, would impress the imagination of a people less passionately devoted than the French to theatrical effect (2).

Early in the morning of the 14th, all Paris was in motion. Four hundred thousand persons repaired with joyful steps to the Champ-de-Mars, and seated themselves, amidst songs of congratulation, upon the seats which surrounded the plain. At seven o'clock the procession advanced. The electors, the representatives of the municipality, the presidents of the districts, the national guards, the deputies of the army and of the departments, moved on in order to the sound of military music, from the site of the Bastille, with banners floating, bearing patriotic inscriptions, and arrayed in varied and gorgeous habiliments. The splendid throng crossed the Seine by a bridge of boats opposite the Ecole militaire, and entered the amphitheatre under a triumphal arch. They were there met by the King and the National Assembly at the foot of a great altar, erected after the manner of the ancients, in the middle of the plain. Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, and four hundred priests, dressed in tri-color robes, celebrated high mass in presence of the assembled multitude; after which, La Fayette, as commander-in-chief of the national guards of France, mounted on a superb white charger, advanced and took the oath in the following terms:—"We swear to be faithful to the nation, to the law, and to the King; to maintain with all our might the constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by the King; and to remain united to all the French by the indissoluble bonds of fraternity." Immediately after, the President of the National Assembly and the King took the oath, and the Queen, lifting the Dauphin in her arms, pledged herself for his adherence to the same sentiments. Discharges of artillery, the rolling of drums, the shouts of the multitude, and the clashing of arms, rent the skies at the auspicious event, which seemed to reunite the monarch and his subjects by the bonds of affection. In the evening, illuminations and festivities prevailed in Paris; and the King, in a concealed calèche, enjoyed the general expression of happiness. A ball took place upon the site of the Bastille; over the gate was this inscription:—"Ici on danse (3)."—"They danced in effect," says a contemporary

(1) Th. i. 204. Mig. i. 106. Toul. i. 205. Lac. viii. 36.

(2) Th. i. 245. Mig. i. 114, 115. Lac. vii. 359.

(3) Fer. Mem. i. 18, 23. Mig. i. 117. Lac. vii. 367. Th. i. 246, 249.

writer, "with joy and security, on the same spot where formerly fell so many tears—where courage, genius, and innocence have so often wept—where so often were stifled the cries of despair."

These festivities interrupted for a short period only the animosity of the factions at each other. The Duke of Orléans, who had recently returned from his exile in London, was accused, along with Mirabeau, of having conspired to produce the revolt of the 5th October. Never was accusation more ill-timed and unfortunate. At that very moment, Mirabeau, disgusted at the revolutionary proceedings of the Assembly, was secretly lending the aid of his great talents to support the cause of the throne, a leaning to which he had been inclined ever since the beginning of the year. He had long foreseen the approaching ruin of the state, and had resolved to do his utmost to stem the torrent of those passions he had had so large a share in creating. The Abbé Maury, who took the lead in the impeachment, was obliged to confess that the evidence did not warrant any criminal proceedings against that illustrious man; and the fact of his having been accused, restored all his popularity, which was beginning to decline. Never did he sway the Assembly with more absolute power than when he ascended the tribune to make his defence. The Assembly quashed the accusation, both against Mirabeau and the Duke of Orléans; but the latter never afterwards regained his reputation, and from that period his influence in the Revolution was at an end (1).

Retirement  
of Necker,  
Sept. 4.

Shortly after, M. Necker retired from the ministry. Ill health was assigned as the motive for a step which was really taken from a sense of declining influence and lost popularity. His own words had proved prophetic; the day of his triumphant entry into Paris had been the first of his decline. He had lived to see the folly of his favourite opinion, that reason, if forcibly stated and blended with sentiment, would in the end sway the most vehement popular bodies. His resignation, couched in eloquent and touching language, was received in the Assembly without regret; and he set out for Switzerland, unattended and a fugitive, over the route which he had so lately traversed in triumph. He was arrested at Arcis sur Aube, and narrowly escaped the fate from which he had so generously saved his enemy, M. de Besenval. Permission to continue his journey was coldly conceded by the Legislature, which owed its existence and popular constitution to his exertions (2);—a memorable instance of the instability of popular applause, but such as must always be looked for in Revolutions. Its early promoters are uniformly neglected, when other and more audacious leaders have succeeded; all classes aim at supremacy; its course is always onward; none who have risen by its impulse can long maintain their ascendancy, because, by remaining at the head of affairs, they check the elevation of inferior ambition.

Change of  
Ministry.  
Sept. 5.

The retreat of Necker produced a total change in the Ministry. Duport du Tertre, Duportail, Fleurieu, Lambert, and Delessart, succeeded to the several offices of government. They were destined to perish on the scaffold; one by the sword of revolutionary assassins. The period was fast approaching when eminence in public life was a sure passport to a violent death (3).

The state of the army was soon such as to require the immediate attention of the Assembly. The recent military code was eminently favourable to the inferior officers; the ancient distinctions and privileges of rank were abolished, and seniority made the sole title to promotion. In proportion as this change

(1) Lac. viii. 83, 84. Mig. i. 118. Th. i. 187, 250, 252.

(2) Mig. i. 118. Lac. vii. 85, Th. i. 237, 254.

(3) Lac. viii. 92. Th. i. 259.

was beneficial to the private soldiers, it was obnoxious to their superiors, who found their advancement obstructed by a multitude of competitors from the inferior ranks, from whom they formerly experienced no sort of hinderance.

Revolt at Metz and Nancy. Aug. 31. The result was, a general jealousy between the privates and their officers: Where the former preponderated, Jacobin clubs, in imitation of those in the metropolis, were formed, and discipline, regulations, and accoutrements, subjected to the discussion of these self-constituted legislators; where the latter, dissatisfaction with the established government generally prevailed. Nowhere had the anarchy risen to a higher pitch than in the garrison of Nancy. It was composed of three regiments, one of which was Swiss, the others French; the proportion of officers in these regiments was much greater than usual in other corps, and they were drawn from the class most hostile to the Revolution. After a long series of disputes between them and the privates, the latter broke out into open revolt, and put their officers under arrest in their own barracks. The Assembly, perceiving the extreme danger of military insubordination in the unsettled state of the public mind, took the most energetic measures to put down the revolt. Mirabeau exerted his powerful voice on the side of order; and BOUILLÉ, commander of Metz, received orders to march with the military force under his command against the insurgents. Between the regular troops and the national guard he assembled three thousand men, with which, after a sharp encounter, he vanquished the mutineers. This prompt and decisive success calmed the fears of the National Assembly, which this revolt had thrown into the most violent alarm; but it excited new fears and jealousies at Paris, from the additional influence which it gave to an already dreaded character (1).

Character of M. de Bouillé. Connected with the aristocratic class by birth, and attached to the throne by principle and affection, M. de Bouillé was yet no enemy to those moderate reforms which all intelligent men felt to be indispensable in the state and army. He was an enemy to the Revolution, not such as it was, but such as it had become. Firm, intrepid, and sagacious, he was better calculated than any other individual to stem the torrent of disaster; but the times were such, that not even the energy of Napoléon could have withstood its fury. Within the sphere of his own command, he maintained inviolate the royal authority: by separating his soldiers from the citizens, he preserved them from the contagion of revolutionary principles; while, at the same time, by the natural ascendant of a great character, he retained their affections. For long he declined the new military oath, to be faithful "to the nation, to the law, and to the King;" at length, moved by the entreaties of Louis, he agreed to take it, in the hopes of preventing the latter part of the obligation from being entirely forgotten in the first (2).

New ecclesiastical oath. Its disastrous effects. Nov. 27, 1790. The Assembly shortly after decreed, that the same oath should be tendered to the ecclesiastics. This rendered irreparable the breach between the church and the Revolution. A great proportion of the churchmen of every rank in France refused this oath, which bound them "to be faithful to the nation, to the law, and to the King, and to maintain with all their power the constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by the people." It was unreasonable to suppose that the ecclesiastics of France could be sincerely attached to a legislature which had deprived them of all their property, and unjust to hold them as contumacious, because they refused to swear fidelity to its constitution. Nevertheless, the Assembly, irritated by their opposition, decreed that every churchman who

(1) Toul. i. 237, 238, 242. Mig. i. 419, 420. Th. i. 254, 255. (2) Toul. i. 419.

refused the oath should be instantly deprived of his benefice. Eight days only were allowed to the resident, and two months to the absent clergy, to testify their adherence (1). A large part of the bishops and curés in the Assembly refused the oath, and their example was followed by the great majority of the clergy throughout France,—a memorable example of conscientious discharge of duty, which might have opened the eyes of the Assembly to the impolicy as well as injustice of carrying on any further persecution against this important class: Such, however, was the spirit of the times, that their refusal was universally ascribed to the most factious motives, and immediately followed by the confiscation of their livings. The dispossessed clergy, suddenly reduced by this cruel measure to destitution, filled the kingdom with their complaints, and excited, in those districts where their influence still remained, the strongest commiseration at their fate. The people beheld with indignation new churchmen filling the vacant pulpits, and administering, with unconsecrated hands, the holiest offices of religion. The dispossessed clergy still lingered in their dioceses or livings, subsisting on the charity of their former flocks, and denouncing as impious the ordinances and proceedings of the Jan. 4, 1791. intrusive ministers. Inflamed with resentment at their proceedings, the Assembly at length fixed a day for the adherence of all the clergy in France, and upon its expiry the decree of forfeiture was universally and rigorously enforced. Mirabeau in vain raised his voice against this tyrannical step; the dictates of justice, the feelings of humanity, were alike drowned in the clamours of the populace (2).

From these measures may be traced the violent animosity of the clergy at the Revolution, and to this cause ascribed the irreligious spirit which has in so remarkable a manner characterised its progress. The clergy being the first class who suffered under the violence of popular spoliation, were the first to raise their voice against its proceedings, and to rouse a portion of the nation to resist its progress; hence the contending parties began to mingle religious rancour with civil dissension. In the cities, in the departments, the people were divided between the refractory and the revolutionary clergy, the faithful deemed none of the exercises of religion duly performed, but by the dispossessed ministers; the democrats looked upon these nonjuring ecclesiastics as fanatics, alike inaccessible to reason, and dangerous to society. The clergy who refused the oath, composed the most respectable part of this body, as might have been expected from men who relinquished rank and fortune for the sake of conscience. Those who accepted it were in part demagogues, whose principles readily gave place to their ambition. The former influenced a large portion of the community, especially in the remote and rural districts; the latter were followed by the most influential part of the inhabitants, the young, the active, the ambitious. In this way the Revolution split the kingdom into two parties, who have never ceased to be strongly exasperated against each other; the one, who adhered to the religious observances of their fathers; the other, who opposed them. The latter have proved victorious in the strife, and the consequence has been, that irreligion has since prevailed in France to an extent unparalleled in any Christian state (3).

This iniquitous measure was speedily followed by another, equally alluring to appearance, and attended in the end by consequences to public freedom fully as disastrous,—the abolition of the right of primogeniture, and establishment of the right of equal succession to landed property to the nearest of kin,

(1) Toul. i. 258. Mig. i. 121. Th. i. 266.

(2) Toul. i. 259, 261. Mig. i. 122.

(3) Toul. 262. Mig. i. 122.

March 18,  
1791.

whether in the descending, ascending, or collateral line, without any regard either to the distinction of the sexes, or of the full and the half blood. This prodigious change, which laid the axe to the root of the aristocracy, and indeed of the whole class of considerable landed proprietors in the kingdom, by providing for the division of their estates on their decease among all their relations in an equal degree of consanguinity, was at the moment so agreeable to the levelling spirit of the times, that it met with very little opposition, and proved so acceptable to the revolutionary party throughout the kingdom, that it survived all the other changes of the government, and remains the common law of inheritance in France at this hour. Napoléon was compelled to adopt it, under a slight modification, into the code which

bears his name; and though fully aware of its dangerous tendency in extinguishing the aristocratic class, who were the only permanent supporters of the throne, or the cause of order, he never felt himself strong enough to propose its repeal. Other changes introduced by the French Revolution have produced consequences more immediately disastrous, none so ultimately fatal to the cause of freedom. It provided for the slow but certain extinction of that grand and characteristic feature of European civilisation, an hereditary and independent body of landed proprietors; removed the barrier which alone has been proved by experience to be permanently adequate to resist the ambition of the commons, or the tyranny of the crown, and left the nation no elements but the burghers in the towns and the poor and helpless peasants in the country, to resist the encroachments of the central power in the capital, armed by the shortsighted ambition of the popular party, with almost all the powers in the state (1).

About the same period, the Clubs of Paris began to assume a formidable character, and, from the influence which they subsequently exercised in the Revolution, merit particular notice. They consisted merely of voluntary associations of individuals who met to discuss public affairs; but from the number and talent of their members, soon became of great importance. The most powerful of these was the famous Club of the JACOBINS, originally an assembly of deputies from Brittany, who met for the discussion of philosophical questions, but who, after the translation of the Assembly to Paris, extended their ramifications through the provinces, and by the admission of every citizen, indiscriminately, became the great focus of revolutionary principles. The moderate party, to counterbalance their influence, established a new club, entitled the Club of 1789, at the head of which were Sièyes, Chapelier, La Fayette, and La Rochefoucault. The latter at first prevailed in the Assembly; the former was the favourite of the people (2). But as the tendency of all public convulsions is to run into extremes, from the incessant efforts of the lower classes to dispossess their superiors, the moderate club soon fell into obscurity, while the Jacobins went on, increasing in number and energy, until at length they overturned the government, and sent forth the sanguinary despots who established the Reign of Terror.

The Royalists in vain endeavoured to establish clubs as a counterpoise to these assemblies. Their influence was too inconsiderable; their numbers too small to keep alive the flame; the leaders of their party had gone into exile; those who remained, laboured under the depression of a declining cause. A club, entitled le Monarchique, had some success at its first opening; but its numbers gradually feel off, and it at length was closed by the municipal

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 150.

(2) Mig. i. 123.

authority, to put an end to the seditious assemblages which it occasioned among the people (1).

The increasing emigration of the noblesse augmented the distrust and suspicions of the people. The departure of the Princesses Adelaide and Victoria, aunts of the King, gave rise to a rumour that the whole royal family were about to depart; and to such a height did the public anxiety arise, that the mob forcibly prevented a visit to St.-Cloud, which the King was desirous to make. La Fayette, who wished to prove the personal liberty of the Monarch, endeavoured in vain to prevail on his guards to allow him to depart. Disgusted at his want of success with the troops, he resigned the command of the national guard, and was only prevailed on to resume it by the earnest entreaties of the whole regiments of Paris. The Assembly, alarmed at the possibility of the King's escaping, passed a decree, declaring that the person of the King was inviolable; that the constitutional regent should be the nearest male heir of the crown; and that the flight of the monarch should be equivalent to his dethronement (2).

The emigration, however, continued with unabated violence. The heads of the noblest families in France repaired to Coblenz, where a large body of emigrants were assembled; no disguise was attempted of their destination; several young noblemen, on leaving the opera, ordered their coachmen to drive to that city. The fever of departure became so general, that the roads leading to the Rhine were crowded with elegant equipages, conveying away the remains of the nobility. They did not, as in the time of the crusades, sell their estates, but abandoned them to the first occupant, trusting soon to regain them by the sword. Vain hope! The Assembly confiscated their properties; the republican armies vanquished their battalions; and the nobility of France for ever lost their inheritances. Vain, frivolous, and self-sufficient, the aristocracy at Coblenz had not laid aside their character when they left their country; their vices were at least as conspicuous in exile as their misfortunes, and declining to avail themselves of the only aid which could have retrieved their fortunes, they refused all offers of assistance from the middling ranks of society. The Prince of Condé, at the head of a brave band, stationed himself on the Upper Rhine, strangers to the intrigues that were going on, but determined to regain their rights by the sword (3).

(1) Mig. i. 123.

(2) Mig. i. 124, 125.

(3) Th. i. 270, 271. Lac. viii. 117. The best defence of the émigrants that ever has been made, is that by Chateaubriand in his unpublished *Memoirs*—"A worthy foreigner by his fireside, in a tranquil state, sure of rising in the morning as safe as he went to bed in the evening, in secure possession of his fortune, with his door well barred, surrounded by friends within and without, will find it no difficult matter to prove, while he drinks a good glass of wine, that the French emigrants were in the wrong, and that an upright citizen should in no extremity desert his country.—It is not surprising that he arrives at such a conclusion. He is at ease, no one thinks of persecuting him; he is in no danger of being insulted, murdered, or burnt in his house, because his ancestor was noble; his conclusions are easily formed. It belongs only to misfortune to judge of misfortune; the hardened heart of prosperity cannot enter into the delicate feelings of adversity. If we consider calmly what the emigrants have suffered in France, where is the man now at his ease, who can lay his hand on his heart and say, 'I would not have acted as they did?' The persecution commenced every where at

the same time in all its parts, and it is a mistake to suppose, that difference of political opinion alone was its cause. Were you the warmest democrat, the most burning patriot, it was enough that you bore an historic name, to subject you to the risk of being prosecuted, burned or hanged, as is proved by the example of Lameth and many others, whose properties were laid waste, notwithstanding their ardour in defence of the people in the Constituent Assembly."—See CHATEAUBRIAND'S *Memoirs*—*Fragments*, p. 78.

Admitting the caustic eloquence of these remarks, the British historian cannot allow their justice. The example of the nobility of his own country, in the disastrous days which succeeded the passing of the Reform Bill, has furnished him with a decisive refutation of them. The flames of Bristol and Nottingham proved that danger had reached their dwellings as well as those of the French noblesse; and if they had in consequence deserted their country and leagued with the stranger, it is hardly doubtful that similar excesses would have laid waste the whole fair realm of England. They did not do so; they remained at home, braving every danger, enduring every insult, and who can over-estimate the influence of such moral courage in mitigating the



This general defection, which was magnified in the revolutionary journals, produced so great an impression, that the two royal princesses were arrested on their journey towards Switzerland, and the Assembly felt the utmost difficulty at allowing them to proceed. Mirabeau, who was now secretly inclined to the royal party, raised his powerful voice to facilitate their departure. "An imperious law," exclaimed the Jacobins, "forbids their departure."—"What law?" said Mirabeau.—"The safety of the people!" replied Lameth.—"The safety of the people!" rejoined Mirabeau, "as if two princesses advanced in years, tormented by the fears of their conscience, could compromise it by their absence or their opposition! The safety of the people! I expected to have heard these words invoked for serious dangers: when you act as tyrants in the name of freedom, who will hereafter trust your assurance?"—"Europe will be surprised to learn," said the Baron de Menou, "that the Assembly has been occupied, during two hours, with the journey of two old ladies, who prefer hearing the mass at Rome to Paris." The ridicule of the thing at length prevailed over the fears of the democrats, and the two princesses were allowed to continue their journey without further interruption (1).

Discussions concerning emigrants, March, 1791.  
 These discussions were but the prelude to the great question of the law against the emigrants, which now occupied the attention, not only of the Assembly, but of all the clubs in France. The project of the law introduced by Chapelier, with the humane design of preventing its adoption, was marked by undisguised severity. It authorized a committee of three persons to pronounce upon refractory emigrants the sentence of outlawry and confiscation. A general horror pervaded the Assembly at the cruel proposal, and Mirabeau, taking a skilful advantage of the first impression, succeeded in preventing its adoption. Never was his eloquence more powerful, or his influence more strongly displayed, than on that occasion, the last on which he ever addressed that body. "The sensation which the project of this law has excited," said he, "proves that it is worthy of a place in the code of Draco, and should never be received into the decrees of the National Assembly of France. It is high time you should be undeceived; if you or your successors should ever give way to the violent counsels by which you are now beset, the law which you now spurn would be regarded as an act of clemency. In the bloody pages of your statute-book, the word DEATH would every where be found; your mouths would never cease to pronounce that terrible word; your statutes, while they spread dismay within the kingdom, would chase to foreign shores all who gave lustre to the name of France; and your execrable enactments would find subjects for execution only among the poor, the aged, and the unfortunate. For my own part, far from subscribing to such atrocious measures, I should conceive myself absolved from every oath of fidelity to those who could carry their infamy so far as to name such a dictatorial commission. Your murmurs are unavailing; to please you is my happiness, to warn you, my duty; the popularity which I desire is not a feeble twig, fanned by the breath of momentary favour; it is

crisis which then so evidently threatened their country? The massacres in France did not begin till after the 10th August, 1792, and yet the whole nobility had emigrated, and were assembled in menacing crowds at Coblenz before the end of 1791. Previous to this, there had, indeed, been a vast catalogue of rural disorders, immediately consequent on the abandonment of the feudal rights in August, 1789, but these excesses had been of short duration, and the two last years of the Constituent

Assembly had been comparatively calm and tranquil. Their emigration was excusable in the autumn of 1789; it was no longer so in the autumn of 1791; and the frightful exasperation of parties which followed, may in a great measure be traced to that culpable desertion of their first patriotic duties, and unhappy union with foreign armies for the invasion of their country.

(1) Lac. viii. 122. Th. i. 272.

an oak, whose roots are spread in the soil, that is to say, fixed on the immutable basis of justice and liberty. I understand the vexation of those, who now so ardent, or rather so perfidious, in their love of freedom, would be puzzled to tell when it arose in their bosoms." These last words excited a violent murmur among the Jacobins. "Silence those thirty voices!" said Mirabeau, in a voice of thunder, and the hall was instantly silent (1).

Mirabeau  
joins the  
throne.

With such prophetic truth did this great man foresee the result of the violent counsels, and angry passions, which were now beginning to tinge the career of the Revolution. He plainly perceived that his popularity was on the wane, not because his eloquence was less powerful, his arguments less cogent, his energy less commanding, than when he reigned the lord of the ascendant, but because he no longer headed the popular movement, and strove to master the passions he had excited among the people. Already the cry had been heard in the streets, "Grande trahison du comte Mirabeau!" and the populace followed the career of less able, but more reckless leaders. Disgusted with the fickleness of the multitude, and foreseeing the sanguinary excesses to which they were fast approaching, he had for long made secret advances to the constitutional party, and entered into correspondence with the King, for the purpose of restraining the further progress of the Revolution. He received for a short time a pension of 20,000 francs, or L.800 a-month, first from the Count d'Artois, and afterwards from the King; but it was not continued till the time of his death, from finding that he was not so pliant as the court party expected. His style of life suddenly changed; magnificent entertainments succeeded each other in endless profusion, and his house resembled rather the hotel of a powerful minister, than that of the leader of a fierce democracy (2). Yet mere venality was not the motive for this great change; he allied himself to the court, partly because he saw it was the only way to stop the progress of the Revolution; he took their pensions, because he regarded himself as their minister to govern the Assembly; and he would have rejected with disdain any proposition to undertake what was unworthy of his character. His design was to support the throne, and consolidate the constitution, by putting a stop to the encroachments of the people. With this view, he proposed to establish, in reality and not in name, the royal authority, and dissolve the Assembly; re-assemble a new one, restore the nobility, and form a constitution as nearly as possible on the English model (3); a wise and generous object, entertained at different times by all the best friends of freedom in France, but which none were able to accomplish, from the flight of the great and powerful body by whom it should have been supported.

Mirabeau's  
plan for  
saving the  
throne.

The plan of Mirabeau was to facilitate the escape of the King from Paris to Compiègne, or Fontainebleau; that he should there throw himself under the guidance of the able and intrepid M. de Bouillé, assemble a royal army, call to his support the remaining friends of order, and openly employ force to stem the torrent. He pledged himself for the immediate support of thirty departments, and the ultimate adhesion of thirty-six more. Between the contending parties he flattered himself he should be able to act as mediator, and restore the monarchy to the consideration it had lost, by founding it on the basis of constitutional freedom. "I would not wish," said he, in a letter to the King, "to be always employed in the vast work of destruction;" and, in truth, his ambition was now to repair

(1) Lac. viii. 122, 126. Mig. i. 125. Th. i. 277, 279.

(2) Dumont, 229, 230. Lac. viii. 128. Mig. i. 126.

(3) Dum. 285, 312, 313. Bouillé, i. 247.

the havoc which he himself had made in the social system. He was strongly impressed with the idea, which was in all probability well founded, that if the King could be brought to put himself at the head of the constitutional party, and resist the further progress of democracy, the country might yet be saved. "You know not," said he, "to what a degree France is still attached to the King, and that its ideas are still essentially monarchical. The moment the King recovers his freedom, the Assembly will be reduced to nothing: it is a colossus with the aid of his name; without it, it would be a mountain of sand. There will be some movements at the Palais-Royal, and that will be all. Should La Fayette attempt to play the part of Washington, at the head of the national guard, he will speedily, and deservedly, perish." He relied upon the influence of the clergy, who were now openly committed against the Revolution with the rural population, and on the energy and intrepidity of the Queen, as sufficient to counterbalance all the consequences of the vacillation of the King. But, in the midst of these magnificent designs, he was cut short by death. A constitution naturally strong, sunk under the accumulated pressure of ambition, excitation, and excessive indulgence (1).

His death, albeit that of a sceptic, had something in it sublime. He was no stranger to his approaching dissolution; but, far from being intimidated by the prospect, he gloried in the name he was to leave. Hearing the cannon discharge upon some public event, he exclaimed, "I already hear the funeral obsequies of Achilles: after my death, the factions will tear to shreds the remnants of the monarchy." His sufferings were severe at the close of his illness: at one period, when the power of speech was gone, he wrote on a slip of paper the words of Hamlet, "To die is to sleep."—"When a sick man is given over, and he suffers frightful pains, can a friendly physician refuse to give him opium?" A few hours before his death, the commencement of mortification relieved his sufferings. "Remove from the bed," said he, "all that sad apparatus. Instead of these useless precautions, surround me by the perfumes and the flowers of spring; dress my hair with care; let me fall asleep amidst the sound of harmonious music." Being aware that recovery was hopeless, he earnestly implored his attendants to give him laudanum to put a period to his existence. His feet April 20, 1791. were already cold, but his countenance still retained its animation, his eye its wonted fire, as if death spared to the last the abode of so much genius. Feigning to comply, they gave him a cup, containing what they assured him was opium. He calmly drank it off, fell back on his pillow, and expired (2).

Such was the end of Mirabeau, the first master-spirit which arose amidst the troubles of the Revolution. He was upwards of forty years of age when he entered public life; but his reputation was already great at the opening of the States-General, and he was looked to as the tribune who was to support the cause of the people against the violence of the crown. Endowed with splendid talents, but impelled by insatiable ambition; gifted with a clear intellect, but the prey of inordinate passions; sagacious in the perception of truth, but indifferent as to the means by which distinction was to be acquired; without great information derived from study, but an unrivalled power of turning what he possessed to the best account,—he affords a memorable example of the inefficacy of mere intellectual power to supply the want of moral, or the guidance of religious feeling. He was too impetuous

(1) Lac. viii. 127, 128. Staël, i. 405, 406. Th. i. 281, 282. De Staël, i. 408. Lac. viii. i. 280. Dum. 207, 210, 211, 257.

133.

to make himself master of any subject; studied nothing profoundly, and owed almost all the writings to which his name was attached, and many of the speeches which he delivered, to Dumont and Duroveray, who aided him in his Herculean labours. His greatest talent consisted in a strong and ardent imagination, a nervous elocution, and an unrivalled power of seizing at once the spirit of the assembly which he was addressing, and applying the whole force of his mind to the point from which the resistance proceeded. Great as his influence was in the Assembly, it was less than it would have been, but for the consequences of his irregular life; and the general belief entertained of his want of principle, made the league with the court, in the close of his career, be ascribed to venal, when it was rather owing to patriotic motives. His inordinate passions cut him short in the most splendid period of his career,—in the vigour of his talents, and the zenith of his power, when he was about to undertake the glorious task of healing the wounds of the Revolution. Necker said that he was “an aristocrat by inclination; a tribune by calculation;” and such in truth was his character; his primary object was to acquire distinction; he espoused at first the popular side, because it offered the fairest chance of gaining celebrity; he was prepared at last to leave it, when he found the gales of popular favour inclining to others more sanguinary, and less enlightened than himself (1).

On his death-bed, he perceived, in the clearest manner, the disastrous consequences which were likely to flow from the ambitious career into which he had had so large a share in precipitating the commons of France. “When I am no more,” he said, “my worth will become known. The misfortunes which I have arrested will then pour on all sides on France; the criminal faction which now trembles before me will be unbridled. I have before my eyes unbounded presentiments of disaster. We now see how much we erred, in not preventing the commons from assuming the name of the National Assembly; since they gained that victory, they have never ceased to show themselves unworthy of it. They have chosen to govern the King, instead of governing by him; but soon neither he nor they will rule the country, but a vile faction, which will overspread it with horrors (2).”

His death was felt by all as a public calamity; by the people, because he had been the early leader and intrepid champion of freedom; by the royalists, because they trusted to his support against the violence of the democratical party. All Paris assembled at his funeral obsequies, which were celebrated with extraordinary pomp by torch-light, amidst the tears of innumerable spectators; twenty thousand national guards, and delegates from all the sections of Paris, accompanied the corpse to the Pantheon, where it was placed by the remains of Descartes. The bones of Voltaire, and subsequently those of Rousseau, were soon after removed to the same cemetery; over the noble portico of which were inscribed the words—“Aux grands Hommes la Patrie reconnaissante (3).”

The death of Franklin was, about the same time, commemorated with strong public feeling in Paris. The loss of the patriot philosopher excited no such mingled feelings; unmixed regret, unalloyed admiration, attended his memory. Over his bust was placed the beautiful epitaph, in allusion to his scientific discoveries, and patriotic exertions:—

*Eripuit cælo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis.*

The literary and philosophical characters in Paris, who had done so much

(1) De Staël, i. 156, 259. Th. i. 123, 124, 125. Dum. 276, 277.

(2) Dumont, 267, 268.

(3) Th. i. 282, Lac. viii. 135, De Staël, i. 408.

to urge on the tempest of democracy were now fully sensible of the ungovernable nature of the power which they had excited. Volney, long one of Mirabeau's intimate friends, openly expressed, in his caustic way, his sense of the thralldom which the Assembly had imposed on itself. "Can you pretend," said he, "to command silence to the galleries? Our masters sit there; it is but reasonable they should applaud or censure their servants' speeches."—"I am astonished to hear you," said one of the bystanders to the Abbé Sabatier, who had first originated the cry for the States-General, "rail so violently at an assembly which you had so powerful a hand in calling into existence."—"Yes," replied the abbé, "but they have changed my States-General at nurse."—"The States-General," said Marmontel, "always remind me of an expression of Madame de Sévigné, 'I would admire Provence, if I never had seen the Provençaux (1).'"

The death of Mirabeau did not extinguish the plans which he had formed for the escape of the King. His state of thralldom was too obvious to be disguised: deprived of the liberty of even visiting his own palaces; restrained by the mob, whom even La Fayette could not control; without power, without money, without consideration, it was mere mockery to talk of the throne as forming a constituent part of the government. The experiment of a constitutional monarchy had been tried and failed; the president of a republic would have had more real authority; his palace was nothing but a splendid prison.

M. de Bouillé was the person on whom the royal family depended in their distress, and Breteuil the counsellor who directed their steps. For some time past he had prepared every thing for their reception, and under covert of a military movement on the frontier, had drawn together the most faithful of his troops, to a camp at Montmédy. Detachments were placed along the road to protect their journey, on the pretext of securing the safe passage of the military chest, which was expected from Paris (2).

Plans of the Court. June 20. On their side the royal family were not idle. Their design, known to few, was betrayed by none; their manner indicated more than usual confidence; and at length, on the 20th June, the King and Dauphin, the Princess Elizabeth, and Madame de Tourzel, succeeded in reaching in disguise a carriage on the Boulevards. The Queen, who set out with a single attendant to avoid suspicion, had nearly discovered their design. Both being ignorant of the streets of Paris, they lost their way, and accidentally met the carriage of La Fayette, which they only avoided by concealing themselves under the colonnade of the Louvre. At length they reached the trembling fugitives, and instantly set out on the road to Montmédy and Châlons. They passed the barrier without being discovered, and proceeded several days from Paris in perfect safety. The success of their enterprise, the distance from Paris, the near approach of the loyal corps under Bouillé, occasioned a fatal relaxation in their precautions. The King delayed too long on the road, and had the imprudence to show himself publicly at Châlons, where he was recognised by some persons, who, however, had the humanity to keep the secret. At Sainte-Menehould, the next stage, the postmaster, Drouet, was struck by the resemblance of his countenance to the engraving on the assignat; the age, the number of the royal family, confirmed him in his suspicions, and, after the carriage had departed, he sounded the alarm, and dispatched one of his friends on a swift horse to cross the country, and intercept him at the succeeding post of Varennes (3).

(1) Dumont, 250, 252. Ségur, iii. 381.

(2) Mig. i. 132. Th. i. 287.

(3) Lac. viii. 248, 256. Bouillé, ii. 275, 280.  
Mig. i. 132. Th. i. 289.

Journey to Varennes. It is painful to reflect on the number of accidents which, by a strange fatality, combined to ruin the enterprise at the very moment when its success seemed certain. The officer in command at Sainte-Menehould, observing the motions of Drouet, sounded his trumpets to horse; but the national guard surrounded the stables, and prevented the dragoons from mounting their horses. An intrepid sergeant, whom he dispatched on the footsteps of the emissary, though he got sight of the pursuer, lost him in a wood. The officer commanding the detachment at Clermont no sooner heard of the arrival of the royal carriages, than he mounted his horse and commanded his men to follow; but a rumour of the quality of the fugitives had got abroad, and they refused to obey. At Varennes, the royal family were seized with consternation at finding neither relays of horses nor a guard of soldiers; in vain they urged the postilions proceed; they delayed their journey for some hours, till Drouet had time to rouse the national guard and barricade a bridge at the eastern side of the town, through which the road passed. When the King arrived at the bridge, the two gardes du corps, who were seated on the front of the carriage prepared their arms to force the passage; but the King, finding his progress opposed by a considerable force, and the muskets of the national guard presented at the carriage, commanded them to submit. The royal fugitives were seized and reconducted by the armed multitude to the post, from whence information was immediately dispatched with the important intelligence to Paris. Fortune had not yet exhausted her malice. Within an hour after the arrest of the King, two squadrons of dragoons, under the command of M. Goguelas, arrived. The King, deceived by the apparent kindness of the Mayor, persuaded him to delay the employment of force, and disclosed his name to the perfidious magistrate, who, instead of acting with the generosity which such conduct deserved, immediately sounded the tocsin, and assembled the national guards from all the communes in the vicinity. Fresh squadrons of horse, detached by M. de Bouillé, arrived; but all the efforts of their officers could not prevail on them to assist the King, and he remained in custody at Varennes (1).

Arrest of the King, and his return to Paris. During the whole of this fatal night, M. de Bouillé was on horseback at the head of the regiment of Royal-Allemand, whose fidelity could be relied on, under the walls of Stenay, anxiously expecting the arrival of the King. Informed too late of the arrest at Varennes, he distributed a louis to each of his soldiers, and set out at the gallop to effect his deliverance. He arrived at Varennes an hour and a half after the aide-de-camp of General La Fayette had entered, with an order to bring the fugitives immediately back to Paris. The royal family had set off an hour before, under a strong guard, on the road to the capital, and the horses of the German regiments were so totally exhausted by the exertions they had made, that further pursuit was impossible. With inexpressible anguish M. de Bouillé was compelled to renounce an object so long the object of his ardent wishes, and doomed soon to witness a succession of unfortunate events, which consigned this virtuous monarch to a prison and the scaffold (2).

Various accidents, doubtless, contributed to disconcert this well-combined enterprise, but they might all have been surmounted but for the treachery or disgraceful irresolution of the royal troops, and the officious zeal with which the national guard assembled to prevent the escape of their sovereign. History can find no pardon for such conduct. Patriotism cannot excuse the

(1) Bouillé's Memoirs, ii. 200. Lac. viii. 265, 267. Th. i. 293, 295, 296.

(2) Lac. viii. 268. Bouillé's Memoirs, ii. 208.

citizen, who sought to consign a virtuous monarch and his innocent family to the scaffold. Honour blushes for the soldiers, who forgot their loyalty amidst the cries of the populace, and permitted their sovereign, the heir of twenty kings, to be dragged captive from amidst their armed squadrons. The warmest friend of freedom, if he has a spark of humanity in his bosom, the most ardent republican, if not steeled against every sentiment of honour, must revolt at such baseness. Britain may well exult at the different conduct which her people exhibited to their fugitive monarchs, under the same circumstances, and contrast with the arrest of Louis at Varennes, the fidelity of the western counties to Charles II, after the battle of Worcester, and the devotion of the Scotch Highlanders to the Pretender, after the defeat of Culloden (1).

Consternation at Paris. Paris was in the utmost consternation when the escape of the King was discovered. The public joy was proportionally great when the intelligence of his arrest was received. Three commissioners, Pétion, La Tour Maubourg, and Barnave, were dispatched to reconduct the prisoners to Paris. They met them at Épernay, and travelled with them to the Tuileries. During the journey, Barnave, though a stern republican, was so melted by the graceful dignity of the Queen, and impressed with the good sense and benevolence of the King, that he became inclined to the royal cause, and ever after supported their fortunes (2).

The Queen, perceiving from the manners and conversation of Barnave, that he was a man of generous feeling and enlightened intellect, conversed openly with him, and produced an impression on his mind which was never afterwards effaced. His attentions to her were so delicate, and his conduct so gentle, that she assured Madame Campan, on her return, that she forgave him all the injuries he had inflicted on her family,—an indulgence which she could not extend to the many nobles who had betrayed the throne by joining the popular cause. Pétion's conduct, on the other hand, was so gross, and his manners to the illustrious captives so insolent, that it was with difficulty that Barnave could restrain his indignation. A poor curate approached the carriage to address the King: the mob who surrounded it instantly fell upon him, threw him on the ground, and were on the point of putting him to death. "Tigers!" cried Barnave, "have you ceased to be Frenchmen? Calling yourselves brave, have you become assassins?" The difference between the Constitutionalists and Democrats was already greater than between the former and the throne. From that time forward the Queen intrusted her cause to his care more than to any other man in the Assembly. "How often would factions the most opposite be reconciled, if they could meet and read each other's thoughts (3)!"

The barbarity of the people was singularly evinced during the journey back to Paris. The two body guards, who had perilled their life in the service of their sovereign, were chained on the outside of the carriage; peasants, armed with scythes and pitchforks, mixed with the escort, uttering the bitterest reproaches; and at each village the municipal authorities assembled to vent their execrations upon the fallen monarch. Unable to bear such inhuman conduct, the Count de Dampierre, a nobleman inhabiting a château near the road, approached to kiss the hand of the King. He was instantly pierced

(1) The secret was intrusted to above 200 persons, most of them in the very poorest circumstances. L. 30,000 was offered for his apprehension; confiscation and death pronounced against his adherents; yet not one Highlander was faithless to his sovereign.

(2) Th. i. 298, 299. Mig. i. 134. Lac. viii. 270, 272.

(3) Madame Campan, ii. 150, *et seq.* Th. i. 289, 299.

by several balls from the escort, his blood sprinkled the royal carriage, and his remains were torn to pieces by the savage multitude (4).

During the first transports of alarm and indignation, La Fayette was nearly massacred by the populace of Paris, so general was the belief that the royal family could not have escaped without his connivance (2). The aide-de-camp whom he had dispatched on the first alarm on the road to Varennes, narrowly escaped the same fate. Had he been killed, the royal fugitives would have still been at Varennes when M. de Bouillé arrived, and all their subsequent misfortunes have been avoided.

At length the captives entered Paris. An immense crowd was assembled to witness their return, who received them in sullen silence. The national guard nowhere presented arms; threatening and frightful cries were heard from the multitude; the people, without uncovering themselves, gazed upon their victims. It required the utmost efforts of La Tour-Maubourg and Barnave to prevent the two faithful body guards from being murdered on the stairs of the Tuileries. Opinions were much divided upon the consequence of the seizure of the royal family: the Democrats openly rejoiced in the re-establishment of their power over them; the humane were already terrified by the prospect of the fate which, to all appearance, awaited them; the thoughtful, embarrassed by the consideration of their disposal (3).

In truth, after they were fairly gone, few of the men of any consideration in Paris were desirous for their arrest. The leaders of the popular party were rejoiced at the near prospect of a republic, which the King's flight occasioned; the Constitutionalists, in good faith, desired to see him established at Montmédy, and emancipated from the state of thralldom in which he had so long been held by the populace; many of the Royalists were not displeased at the abandonment of the helm by a monarch, whose concessions had brought the monarchy to the brink of ruin; all gratified at his extrication from the iron despotism of Parisian democracy. In sending the commissioners to arrest the King, the Assembly, in opposition to its better judgment, yielded to the clamours of an impassioned populace (4).

"The National Assembly," says Napoléon, "never committed so great an error, as in bringing back the King from Varennes. A fugitive and powerless, he was hastening to the frontier, and in a few hours would have been out of the French territory. What should they have done in these circumstances? Clearly facilitated his escape, and declared the throne vacant by his desertion; they would thus have avoided the infamy of a regicide government, and attained their great object of republican institutions. Instead of which by bringing him back, they embarrassed themselves with a sovereign whom they had no just reason for destroying, and lost the inestimable advantage of getting quit of the royal family, without an act of cruelty (5)." These are the words of a man who never scrupled at the means necessary to gain an end; who was weakened by no mawkish sensibility, and deterred by no imaginary dangers. They are a fine illustration of the eternal truth, that cruelty is in general as shortsighted as it is inhuman, and that no conduct is so wise as that which is the least open to moral reproach.

The return of the King a captive to Paris, and the necessity of settling something definitive as to his fate, occasioned an immediate division between the parties in the capital, and first led to the open avowal of

(1) Lac. viii. 271. Camp. ii. 151.

(2) Lac. viii. 276.

(3) Lac. viii. 281, 282, 283.

(4) Th. i. 292, 293.

(5) Napoleon's Memoirs, i. 1.



Republican principles. The mob, with savage ferocity, openly demanded his head; a Republic was loudly called for in the clubs of the Cordeliers and Jacobins; Robespierre, Marat, and their associates, daily inflamed the public mind by publications and speeches, having the most revolutionary tendency (1).

"If a Republic," said Condorcet, "ensues in consequence of a new Revolution, the results will be terrible; but if it is proclaimed just now, during the omnipotence of the Assembly, the transition will be easy; and it is incomparably better to do it when the power of the King is wholly prostrated, than it will be when he may so far have regained it as to make an effort to avert the blow." No one at that period ventured to argue in the Assembly that royalty was desirable in itself, or as a counterpoise to the ambition of the people; the fact that such a doctrine could not be broached in the legislature, is the strongest proof how indispensable it is to regulate freedom that it should exist (2).

Seditious cries were incessantly heard in the streets; an expression of ferocity characterised the countenances of the numerous groups assembled in the public places; and the frightful figures began to be seen who had emerged from obscurity on the 5th October, and subsequently proved triumphant during the Reign of Terror. On the other hand, the upright and intelligent part of the Assembly, awakened by the threatening signs which surrounded them to a sense of the impending danger, united their strength to resist the multitude. Barnave, Duport, and Lameth, although passionate friends of freedom, coalesced with La Fayette and the supporters of a constitutional monarchy. In the struggle which ensued, the want of the powerful voice of Mirabeau was severely felt. But even his commanding eloquence would have been unavailing. In those days of rising democracy and patrician desertion, nothing could resist the new-born energy of the people (3).

On the morning after his return, Louis was, by a decree of the Assembly, provisionally suspended from his functions, and a band, composed of national guards, placed over his person, that of the Queen, and the Dauphin. All the three were judicially and minutely examined by three deputies, but nothing tending to criminate either elicited. They were strictly guarded in the palace, and allowed only to take a morning walk in the garden of the Tuileries before the public were admitted; while the Assembly prepared a legislative measure on the subject of his flight. Barnave and the two Lameths now had the generosity openly to espouse the cause of the unfortunate monarch, and it was in a great degree owing to the address and ability of the former, who suggested the answers of the King and Queen to the commissioners of the Assembly, that he was able to show that he never intended to leave France, but only to extricate himself from the dangers of the capital. Bouillé, at the same time, wrote a letter to the Assembly in which he generously took upon himself the entire criminality of the journey, by protesting that he was its sole author; while he declared, in the name of the allied sovereigns, to whose territories he soon after retired, that he would hold them responsible for the safety of the royal prisoners (4).

The object of the Republicans was to make the flight of the King the immediate pretext for his dethronement and death; that of the Constitutionalists, to preserve the throne, notwithstanding the unfortunate issue of that attempt. The examination of Louis, on the object of his journey to Varennes, was intended by the Republicans to be the ground-

(1) Mig. i. 134. Th. i. 301.

(2) Dumont, 325.

(3) Mig. i. 134, 135. Lac. viii. 284, 285, 292.

De Staël, i. 361.

(4) Th. i. 302, 303.

work of his prosecution ; but it was so adroitly managed by the committee, to whom it was referred, that, instead of effecting that object, it went far to exculpate him even in the eyes of the most violent of the Jacobin party. The seven committees, to whom that important examination was referred, reported that the journey of the King afforded no foundation for an accusation against him. The debate on this report called forth the most distinguished leaders, and developed the principles on both sides. The inviolability of the King's person, which had been solemnly agreed to by the Assembly, was the basis of the argument on the constitutional side. "To admit," said Robespierre, in answer, "the inviolability of the King for acts which are personal to himself, is to establish a god upon earth. We can allow no fiction to consecrate impunity to crime, or give any man a right to bathe our families in blood. But you have decreed, it is said, this inviolability : so much the worse. An authority more powerful than that of the constitution now condemns it ; the authority of reason, the conscience of the people, the duty of providing for their safety. The constitution has not decreed the absolute inviolability of the sovereign ; it has only declared him not answerable for the acts of his ministers. To this privilege, already immense, are you prepared to add an immunity from every personal offence—from perjury, murder, or robbery ? Shall we, who have levelled so many other distinctions, leave this, the most dangerous of them all ? Ask of England if she recognises such an impunity in her sovereigns ? Would you behold a beloved son murdered before your eyes by a furious king, and hesitate to deliver him over to criminal justice ? Enact laws which punish all crimes without exception, or suffer the people to avenge them for themselves. You have heard the oaths of the King. Where is the juryman, who, after having heard his manifesto, and the account of his journey, would hesitate to declare him guilty of perjury, that is, felony towards the nation ? The King is inviolable ; but so are you. Do you now contend for his privilege to murder with impunity millions of his subjects. Do you dare to pronounce the King innocent, when the nation have declared him guilty ? Consult its good sense, since your own has abandoned you. I am called a republican : whether I am or not, I declare my conviction, that any form of government is better than that of a feeble monarch, alternately the prey of contending factions (1)."

"Regenerators of the empire," said Barnave, in reply, "follow ; continue the course you have commenced. You have already shown that you have courage enough to destroy the abuses of power ; now is the time to demonstrate, that you have the wisdom to protect the institutions you have formed. At the moment that we evince our strength, let us manifest our moderation ; let us exhibit to the world, intent on our movements, the fair spectacle of peace and justice. What would the trial of the King be, but the proclamation of a republic ? Are you prepared to destroy, at the first shock, the constitution you have framed with so much care ? You are justly proud of having closed a Revolution, without a parallel in the annals of the world : you are now called on to commence a new one : to open a gulf, of which no human wisdom can see the bottom ; in which laws, lives, and property, would be alike swallowed up. With wisdom and moderation, you have exercised the vast powers committed to you by the state : you have created liberty ; beware of substituting in its stead a violent and sanguinary despotism. Be assured that those who now propose to pass sentence on the King, will do the same to yourselves, when you first thwart their ambition. If you

(1) Lac. viii. 292, 295, 296. Mig. i. 135, 136.

prolong the Revolution, it will increase in violence. You will be beset with clamours for confiscations and murders; the people will never be satisfied but with substantial advantages, and they cannot be obtained, but by destroying their superiors. The world hitherto has been awed by the powers we have developed; let them now be charmed by the gentleness which graces them."

Moved by these generous sentiments, the Assembly adopted the report of the committee, with only seven dissentient voices. But to this decree was annexed, as a concession to the popular party, a clause, declaring, that if the King shall put himself at the head of an armed force, and direct it against the nation, he shall be deemed to have abdicated, and shall be responsible for his acts as an ordinary citizen. Of this enactment the popular party made fatal use in the subsequent insurrections against the throne (1).

Revolt in  
the Champ-  
de-Mars.

Foiled in their endeavours to influence the Assembly, the Democrats next endeavoured to rouse the people. A petition, drawn up by Brissot, author of the *Patriot Français*, and an able republican, was taken to the Champ-de-Mars for signature. The clubs of the Jacobins and the Cor-

July 17. deliers declared that they would no longer recognise Louis as sovereign, and published the most inflammatory harangues, which were immediately placarded in all the streets of Paris. A general insurrection was prepared for the following day. "We will repair," said they, "to the Field of the Federation, and a hundred thousand men will dethrone the perjured King. That day will be the last of all the friends of treason." The 17th July was the day fixed for the insurrection; there was no regular force in Paris, every thing depended on the firmness of the National Guard (2).

On the morning of the 17th, two different bands of the people were in motion; one decently clothed, grave in manner, small in number, headed by Brissot; the other, hideous in aspect, ferocious in language, formidable in numbers, under the guidance of Robespierre. Both were confident of success, and sure of impunity; for hitherto not a single insurrection had been suppressed, and not one popular crime, excepting the murder of the baker François, had been punished. Two unhappy invalids had placed themselves under the steps of the altar on the Champ-de-Mars to observe the extraordinary scene; a cry arose that they were assassins placed there to blow up the leaders of the people; without giving themselves the trouble to ascertain whether any powder was there, they beheaded the unhappy wretches on the spot, and paraded their heads on pikes round the altar of France (3).

Vigorous  
measures of  
the Assem-  
bly.

The Assembly took the most energetic measures to support their authority. They declared their sittings permanent, and caused the municipality to summon the national guard to their several rendezvous; M. La Fayette put himself at their head, and proceeded towards the Champ-de-Mars, followed by twelve hundred grenadiers. On the road, a traitor in the ranks discharged a pistol at him, which fortunately missed its aim; he had the magnanimity to liberate the offender from the confinement in which he was placed. Mean-while, the red flag was hoisted by order of Bailly, at the Hôtel-de-Ville, and the good citizens earnestly urged the proclamation of martial law. Arrived in sight of the insurgents, La Fayette unfurled the red flag, and summoned the multitude, in the name of the law, to disperse: cries of "A bas le drapeau rouge! à bas les baïonnettes!" accompanied by volleys of stones, were the only answer. A discharge in the air was then given, which, not being attended by the effect of intimidation, La

(1) Mig. i. 137. Lac. viii. 298, 302. Th. i. 309, 310.

(2) Mig. i. 137. Lac. viii. 308. Th. i. 311.

(3) Lac. viii. 309, 312. Th. i. 311.

Fayette resolutely ordered a volley point-blank, which immediately brought down above one hundred of the insurgents. In an instant the crowd dispersed, and the Champ-de-Mars was deserted. Robespierre, Marat, and the other leaders of the insurrection, disappeared, and the discouragement of their party was complete. Trembling with apprehension, the former implored an asylum from his friends, deeming himself insecure, notwithstanding his inviolability as deputy, in his obscure abode. The revolutionary fury was effectually quelled, and had the government possessed the energy to have marched on the clubs of the Jacobins and of the Cordeliers, and closed these great fountains of treason, the constitutional monarchy might have been established, and the Reign of Terror prevented. But this act of vigour being followed by no others of the same character, gradually lost its effect; the clubs resumed their inflammatory debates, the demagogues reappeared from their retreats, and the march of the Revolution continued with redoubled vigour (1). The recollection of so signal a defeat, however, sunk deep in the minds of the Democrats, and they took a bloody revenge, years afterwards, upon the intrepid Bailly, who had first hoisted the signal of resistance to popular licentiousness.

But do not  
follow it up

The Assembly was embarrassed by the consequences of their success. They received congratulatory addresses from every part of France; but all of them had a moderate, many a royalist, tendency, a signal proof of the ease with which at this period the Revolution might have been checked by proper firmness in the government and union in the higher classes. It was difficult, in the close of their career, to depart from the principles with which they commenced; and they were alarmed at the new allies who crowded round their victorious standard. Indecision, in consequence, characterised their measures. Recollection of the past inclined them to popular, dread of the future to constitutional measures. In their efforts to please all factions, they acquired an ascendancy over none, and left the monarchy a prey to the furious passions which now agitated the people from the consequences of the ferment they themselves had created (2).

The termination of their labours was now approaching. The several committees to whom the different departments of the constitution had been referred, had all made their reports; the members were fatigued with their divisions, the people desirous of exercising the powers of election. Nothing remained but to combine the decrees regarding the constitution into one act, and submit it for the sanction of the King (3).

Proposed to  
modify the  
constitution.

It was proposed, in consolidating the different decrees regarding the constitution, to revise some of its articles. The democratic tendency of many of its parts was already perceived; and the Assembly trembled at the agitation which pervaded the empire. All the subordinate questions which remained were decided in favour of the royal authority; but they wanted courage, and perhaps had not influence to alter the cardinal points of the constitution. They were strongly urged, before it was too late, to correct their faults. "Have the courage," said Malouet, "to confess your errors, and repair them. You are inclined to efface some blemishes; go a step further, and correct some deformities. While the work is still in your hands, is it not better to give more strength and stability to the fabric?" The design of Barnave, Malouet, and the Lameths, who were now fully alive to the perilous nature of the constitution they had framed, was to restore the separation of the chambers, and the absolute veto to the crown. For this purpose,

(1) Mig. i. 138, 139. Lac. viii. 312, 315. Th. i. 311, 312.

(2) Mig. i. 139. Lac. viii. 317, 318. Th. i. 315.

(3) Mig. i. 140. Th. i. 316.

it was agreed that Malouet should propose the revision of these and many other articles of the constitution; that Barnave should reply in vehement strains, but at the same time give up those that were agreed on as proved by experience to be inexpedient. But while this was the general opinion of the rational and prudent members, the violent party men on both sides, though from different motives, combined to hasten the dissolution of the Assembly. The Royalists wished that the faults of the constitution should remain so glaring, as to render it impossible to put it in practice. The Jacobins, more alive to the signs of the times, dreaded the reaction in favour of order which had recently arisen among the higher, and hoped every thing from the revolutionary spirit which was now spreading among the lower orders. In vain Barnave, Lameth, Chapelier, and other enlightened men, implored them to retain the legislative power yet a while in their hands; they were met by complaints of their unpopularity, and of the necessity of dissolving while yet any influence remained, and the majority, weary of the work of regeneration, resolved to separate. As a last measure of security, they declared that the representatives of France might revise the constitution, but not till after the expiration of thirty years; a vain precaution, immediately forgotten amidst the impetuosity and struggles of their successors (1).

Self-denying ordinance. Before finally submitting the constitution to the King, the Assembly, on the motion of Robespierre, passed a destructive measure, similar to the self-denying ordinance of the English Parliament, declaring that none of its members should be capable of election into the next legislature. This resolution, so ruinous in its consequences, was produced by various motives. The desire of regaining their power on the part of the aristocrats; inextinguishable resentment against the leaders of the Assembly on the part of the court; wild hopes of anarchy, and a fear of reaction in the existing members, on the part of the democrats; disinterested patriotism among the friends of their country; a wish for the popularity consequent on a disinterested action, combined to produce a decree fraught with the last miseries to France. The King was so ill advised at this juncture, that he employed all his own influence, and that of the Queen, to procure the enactment of this decree. The idea was prevalent among the Royalists that the public mind was entirely changed; that the people had become attached to the sovereign; and that, if the old members could only be excluded, an Assembly would be returned at the next election which would undo all that the former one had done. When the question accordingly was proposed, the Royalists united with the Jacobins, and stifling all arguments by a cry for the vote, passed the fatal resolution (2). This system of changing their governors at stated periods, always has, and always will be, a favourite theme with Republicans, because it magnifies their own, and diminishes their rulers' importance; but it is more ruinous than any other system that can be devised to national welfare, because it places the direction of affairs for ever in inexperienced hands, and gives to private interest the weight which should belong to public virtue.

King reinvested with his power. Previous to the act of the constitution being submitted to the King, he was reinvested with the command of his guard, and restored to the freedom of which he had been deprived since his arrest at Varennes. After several days' careful examination, he declared his acceptance in the following terms:—"I accept the constitution; I engage to maintain it alike against civil discord and foreign aggression, and to enforce its execution Sept. 12, 1791. to the utmost of my power." This message occasioned the warm-

(1) Mig. i. 140, 145. Lac. viii. 320, 321. Th. i. 315. Bouillé, ii. 314, et seq.

(2) Dumont, 338, 339. Mig. i. 141. Th. i. 314. Lac. viii. 323. Bouillé, ii. 330, 345.

est applause. La Fayette, taking advantage of the moment, procured a general amnesty for all those who had been engaged in the flight of the King, or compromised by the events of the Revolution (1).

Sept. 11, 1791. On the following day, the King repaired in person to the Assembly, to declare his acceptance of the constitution. An immense crowd accompanied him with loud acclamations; he was the object of the momentary applause of the tribunes of the people; but the altered state of the royal authority was evinced by the formalities observed even in the midst of the general enthusiasm. The monarch was no longer seated on a throne apart from his subjects; two chairs, in every respect alike, were allotted to him, and to the president; and he did not possess, even in appearance, more authority than the leader of that haughty body (2).

Closing of the Assembly. At length, on the 29th September, the sittings of the Assembly were closed. The King attended in person, and delivered a speech full of generous sentiments and eloquent expressions. "In returning to your constituents," said he, "you have still an important duty to discharge; you have to make known to the citizens the real meaning of the laws you have enacted, and to explain my sentiments to the people. Tell them, that the King will always be their first and best friend; that he has need of their affection; that he knows no enjoyment but in them, and with them; that the hope of contributing to their happiness will sustain his courage, as the satisfaction of having done so will constitute his reward." Loud and sincere applause followed these expressions. The President, Thouret, then, with a loud voice, said, "The Constituent Assembly declares its mission accomplished, and its sittings are now closed (3)."

Magnificent fêtes were ordered by the King for the occasion, which exhausted the already weakened resources of the throne. The palace and gardens of the Tuileries were superbly illuminated, and the King, with the Queen and royal family, drove through the long-lighted avenues of the Champs-Élysées amidst the acclamations of the people. But a vague disquietude pervaded all ranks of society (4); the monarch sought in vain for the expressions of sincere joy which appeared on the fête of the Federation of 14th July; then, all was confidence and hope,—now, the horrors of anarchy were daily anticipated. The Assembly had declared the Revolution closed; all persons of intelligence feared that it was only about to commence.

Such is the history of the Constituent Assembly of France; an Assembly which, amidst much good, has produced more evil than any which has ever existed in the world. Called to the highest destinies, intrusted with the noblest duties, it was looked to as commencing a new era in modern civilisation, as regenerating an empire grey with feudal corruption, but teeming with popular energy. How it accomplished the task, is now ascertained by experience. Time, the great vindicator of truth, has unfolded its errors and illustrated its virtues.

Merits and errors of the Constituent Assembly. The great evils which afflicted France were removed by its exertions. Liberty of religious worship, but imperfectly provided for in 1787, was secured in its fullest extent; torture, and the punishment of the wheel, abolished; trial by jury, publicity of criminal proceedings, the examination of witnesses before the accused, counsel for his defence, fixed by law; the ancient parliaments, the fastnesses of a varied jurisprudence, though ennobled by great exertions in favour of freedom, suppressed, and one uniform system of criminal jurisprudence established; *lettres de*

(1) Mig. i. 141. Th. i. 316. Lac. viii. 445.

(2) Mig. i. 141. Lac. viii. 351. Th. i. 316.

(3) Mig. i. 142. Lac. viii. 352.

(4) De Staël, i. 434, 436. Lac. viii. 352, 353.

*cachet* annihilated; exemption from taxation on the part of the nobles and the clergy extinguished; an equal system of finance established through the whole kingdom; the most oppressive imposts, those on salt and tobacco, the *taille*, and the tithes, suppressed; the privileges of the nobility, the feudal burdens, abolished. France owes to the Constituent Assembly the doubtful experiment of national guards; the opening of the army to courage and ability from every class of society; and a general distribution of landed property among the labouring classes,—the greatest benefit, when not brought about by injustice or the spoliation of others, which can be conferred upon a nation (1). The beneficial effect of these changes was speedily demonstrated by the consequences of the errors into which her government subsequently fell. They enabled the nation to bear and to prosper under accumulated evils, any one of which would have extinguished the national strength under the monarchy,—national bankruptcy, depreciated assignats, civil divisions, the Reign of Terror, foreign invasion, the conscription of Napoléon, subjugation by Europe.

The errors of the Constituent Assembly have produced consequences equally important, some still more lasting. By destroying, in a few months, the constitution of a thousand years, they set afloat all the ideas of men, and spread the fever of innovation universally throughout the empire; by confiscating the property of the church, they gave a fatal precedent of injustice, too closely followed in future years, exasperated a large and influential class, and dissolved public manners by leaving the seeds of war between the clergy and the people; by establishing the right of universal suffrage, and conferring the nomination of all offices of trust upon the nation, they habituated the people to the exercise of powers inconsistent with the monarchical form of government which they themselves had established, and which the new possessors were incapable of exercising with advantage. They diminished the influence of the crown to such a degree as to render it incapable of controlling the people, and left the kingdom a prey to factions, arising out of the hasty changes which they had introduced. Finally, by excluding themselves from the next Assembly, they deprived France of all the benefit of their experience, and permitted their successors to commence the same circle of error and innovation, to the danger of which they had been too late awakened (2).

By combining the legislature into one assembly, in which the representatives of the lower ranks had a decisive superiority, they in effect vested supreme political power in one single class of society: a perilous gift at all times, but in an especial manner to be dreaded when that class was in a state of violent excitement, and totally unaccustomed to the powers with which they were intrusted. By removing the check of a separate deliberative as-

(1) De Staël, i. 276, 282.

It is impossible to travel through Switzerland, Tyrol, Norway, Sweden, Biscay, and other parts of Europe, where the peasantry are proprietors of the land they cultivate, without being convinced of the great effect of such a state of things in ameliorating the condition of the lower orders, and promoting the development of those habits of comfort and artificial wants which form the true regulator of the principle of increase. The aspect of France since the Revolution, when compared with what it was before that event, abundantly proves that its labouring poor have experienced the benefit of this change; and that, if it had not been brought about by injustice, its fruits would have been highly beneficial. But no great act of iniquity can be committed by a nation, any more than an individual, without its consequences being felt by the latest

generations. The confiscation of land has been to France what a similar measure was to Ireland, a source of weakness and discord which will never be closed. It has destroyed the barrier alike against the crown and the populace, and left the nation no protection against the violence of either. Freedom has been rendered to the last degree precarious, from the consequences of this great change; and the subsequent irresistible authority of the central government, how tyrannical soever at Paris, may be distinctly traced to the prostration of the strength of the provinces by the destruction of their landed proprietors. The ruinous consequences of this injustice upon the future freedom of France will be amply demonstrated in the sequel of this work.

(2) Mig. i. 144.

sembly they exposed the political system to the unrestrained influence of those sudden gusts of passion to which all large assemblages of men are occasionally subject, and to which the impetuosity of the French character rendered them in an especial manner liable. By destroying the parliaments, the hierarchy, the corporations, and the privileges of the provinces, they swept away the firmest bulwark by which constitutional freedom might have been protected in future times, by annihilating those institutions which combine men of similar interests together, and leaving only a multitude of insulated individuals to maintain a hopeless contest with the executive and the capital, wielding at will the power of the army and the resources of government. By their overthrow of the national religion, and appropriation to secular purposes of all the funds for its support, they not only gave the deepest wound to public virtue, but inflicted an irreparable injury on the cause of freedom, by arraying under opposite banners the two great governing powers of the human mind—diminishing the influence of the elevated and spiritual, and removing the control to the selfish principles of our nature.

It is a fact worthy of the most serious consideration from all who study the action and progress of the human mind under the influence of such convulsions, that all these great and perilous changes were carried into effect by the Constituent Assembly, without any authority from their constituents, and directly in the face of the cahiers containing the official announcement of their intentions. The form of government which they established, the confiscation of ecclesiastical property which they introduced, the abolition of the provincial parliaments, the suspensive veto, the destruction of titles of honour, the infringement on the right of the King to make peace or war, the nomination of judges by the people (1), were all so many usurpations directly contrary to the great majority of these official instruments, which still remain a monument of the moderation of the people at the commencement, as their subsequent acts were proof of their madness during the progress, of the Revolution.

The single fault of the Constituent Assembly which led to all these disastrous consequences was, that, losing sight of the object for which alone they were assembled, the redress of grievances, they directed all their efforts to the attainment of power. Instead of following out the first object, and improving the fabric of the state, to which they were called by their monarch and sent by their country, they destroyed all the balances and equipoises which give it a steady direction, and serve as correctives to any violent disposition which may exist in any of the orders. When they had done this, they instantly, and with unpardonable perfidy, laid the axe to the root equally of public faith and private right, by confiscating the property of the church. They made and recorded, what has been aptly styled by Mr. Burke a digest of anarchy called the Rights of Man, and by their influence destroyed every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. "The real object," says Mr. Burke, "of all this, was to level all those institutions and sever all those connexions, natural, religious, and civil, which hold together society by a chain of subordination—to raise soldiers against their officers, tradesmen against their landlords, curates against their bishops, children against their parents." An universal liberation from all restraints, civil, and religious, moral, political, and military, was the grand end of all their efforts, which the weakness of the holders of property enabled them to carry into complete effect. Their precipitance, rashness,

(1) Calonne, 216, 218, 222, 223, 290, 304.



and vehemence in these measures, was the more inexcusable that it had not the usual apology which attends revolutionists, that they were impelled by terror or necessity; on the contrary, their whole march was a continued triumph—their popularity was such that they literally directed the public movement—in unresisted might, their pioneers went before them, levelling in the dust alike the bulwarks of freedom, the safeguards of property, the buttresses of religion, the restraints of virtue (1).

Infinite have been the causes assigned for the disastrous progress of the French Revolution. There are four of such paramount importance that they obliterate all the others; and these are,—the fever of hasty innovation, the desertion of the country by the nobility, the character of the King, and the treachery of the army.

Passion for innovation. A passion for innovation, a disregard for every thing sacred or venerable, a vehement wish to uproot all that is sanctioned by experience or recommended by antiquity, is the sure sign of the revolutionary fervour,—a passion totally distinct from the sober and cautious principles of real freedom. Never did this ruinous passion appear with such vehemence as in France during the sitting of the Constituent Assembly (2). A firm union among all the higher classes, a steadfast adherence to legal right on the part of the depositaries of power, could alone be expected to stem so powerful and perilous a torrent, and this was wholly wanting at the very time when it was most required.

Irresolution of the King. The personal character of the King was doubtless the first and greatest cause which prevented this resistance being opposed to the work of innovation, and converted the stream of improvement into the cataract of revolution. Weakness, vacillation, irresolution in presence of democratic ambition, are as fatal as in presence of a hostile army. They are the sure prelude to a bloody defeat. So strongly was this fatal defect in the King's character felt by the wisest men of the popular party in France, that they have not hesitated to ascribe to it the whole miseries of the Revolution (3). Had a firm and resolute king been on the throne, it is doubtful whether the Revolution would have taken place, or at least whether it would have been attended by such horrors. All the measures of Louis conspired to bring it about; the benevolence and philanthropy which, duly tempered by resolution, would have formed a perfect, when combined with weakness and vacillation, produced the most dangerous of sovereigns. His indecision, weakness, and half-measures ruined every thing; the inferior causes which conspired to bring about the same disastrous result, all emanated from that source. There was hardly an epoch during the sitting of the first Assembly, after its dangerous tendency began to be perceived, when an intrepid monarch, aided by a resolute nobility, might not have averted the tempest, turned the stream of innovation into constitutional channels, and established, in conformity with the wishes of the great majority of the nation, a limited monarchy, similar to that which, for above a century, has given dignity and happiness to the British empire (4).

Treachery of the troops. The treachery of the troops was the immediate cause of the catastrophe which precipitated the throne beneath the feet of the Assembly; and the terrible effects with which it was attended, the bloody tyranny which it induced, the ruinous career of foreign conquest which it occasioned, and the national subjugation in which it terminated, may in a

(1) Burke, v. 14, 15, 89.

(2) Ségur, i. 272, 324.

(3) Dumont, 343.

(4) Ibid.

great degree be ascribed to the treason or vacillation of these, the sworn defenders of order and loyalty. But for their defection, the royal authority would have been respected, democratic ambition coerced, a rallying point afforded for the friends of order, and the changes which were required confined within safe and constitutional bounds. The revolt of the French guards was the signal for the dissolution of the bonds of society in France; and they have been hardly reconstructed, even by the terrible Committee of Public Safety, and the merciless sword of Napoléon. A memorable example of the extreme peril of soldiers tampering with their first duties, fidelity and obedience; and of the wisdom of the maxim of the first and best of modern Republicans, Carnot,—“The armed force is essentially obedient; it acts, but never deliberates (1).”

What the treachery of the army had commenced, the desertion of the nobility consummated. The flight of this immense body, with their families and retainers, estimated by Mr. Burke at seventy thousand persons, completed the prostration of the throne, by depriving it of its best defenders. The friends of order naturally abandoned themselves to despair when they saw the army revolting, the crown yielding, and the nobility taking to flight. Who would make the show even of resisting, when these, the leaders and bulwark of the state, gave up the cause as hopeless? The energy of ambition, the confidence arising from numbers, the *prestige* of opinion, passed over to the other side. A party speedily becomes irresistible when its opponents shrink from the first encounter (2).

The constitution of 1791 did not long survive its authors. The spirit of revolt commenced with the middling, but speedily descended to the lowest class. They formed the Legislative Assembly, but it rapidly perished under the assaults of the multitude; the victory had been gained by the middling ranks over the aristocracy, but the victors soon sunk beneath the blows of the populace. Such is the natural march of Revolutions; each order feels itself restrained by the one immediately above itself, and is stimulated to revolt by the successful issue of resistance to still higher authority. A firm combination among the friends of order can alone stop this disastrous progress. In France it was prevented from taking place by the delusive passion for change which infected so many of the better classes; the weakness of the King, the treachery of the army, and the pusillanimous desertion of all the higher ranks in the state (3).

(1) Carnot, 329.

(2) Dumont, 347.

(3) De Staël, ii. 1, 9. Mig. i. 145.

## CHAPTER V.

FROM THE OPENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO THE FALL OF THE MONARCHY.

## ARGUMENT.

Formation of the Legislative Assembly—State of the Country during the Elections—Continued Emigration of the Nobles—Its disastrous Effects—Opening of the Assembly—Its Parties—The Girondists and Feuillants—Clubs in the Capital, the Cordeliers and Jacobins—Contests with the Church—Debate on the Confiscation of their Property, and the Laws against the Emigrants—Severe Decrees against the latter, and against the Nonjuring Clergy—The King refuses to sanction them; but recalls the Emigrants, and sanctions the Decree against Count d'Artois—Election of a Mayor of Paris—Debate on the Foreign Relations—Preparations for War—They are strongly opposed by Robespierre—Change of Ministry—The Girondists admitted to power—Dumouriez, his character, and Madame Roland—Foreign Affairs—War desired by all Parties, but especially the Girondists—King yields against his own judgment, and War declared—Massacre of Avignon—Dreadful insurrection in St.-Domingo—Royal Guard disbanded by the Assembly—Change of Ministry—New Ministers chosen from the Feuillants—Girondists, in revenge, organize an insurrection against the Throne—La Fayette's Letter to the Assembly—Tumult of 20th June—Assembly and Royal Palace both overrun by the Populace—Heroic conduct of the King, Queen, and Princess Elizabeth—First appearance of Napoléon—Public indignation at this outrage—La Fayette arrives in Paris—He is not supported by the Court or National Guard, and fails—Girondists openly organize a Revolt—Debates in the Assembly on that subject—Fête of 14th July—Arrival of Fédérés in Paris—Various Plans of the Court—Advance of the Prussians and Austrians—Proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick—Further preparation for a Revolt—Breaks out on the 10th August—Preparations of the Court, and of the Insurgents—King retires with the Royal Family to the Legislative Assembly—Conflict in the Place du Carrousel, and Massacre of the Swiss—Capture and Sack of the Palace—Dethronement of the King—General Reflections on the Errors of the Revolutionists, the Nobles, and the Allies, which led to these events.

UNIVERSAL suffrage, or a low qualification for electors, has, in every age of democratic excitement, been the favourite object of the people. All men, it is said, are by nature equal; the superior privileges enjoyed by some are the growth of injustice and superstition, and the first step toward rational freedom is to restore the pristine equality of the species. This principle had been acted upon, accordingly, by the Constituent Assembly. They had given the right of voting for the national representatives to every labouring man of the better sort in France; and the Legislative Assembly affords the first example, on a great scale, in modern Europe, of the effects of a completely popular election.

If the object of government were only the protection of persons from injury or injustice, and every man, in whatever rank, were equally capable of judging on political subjects, there can be no question that the claims of the lower orders to an equal share in the representation with the higher would be well founded, because every man's life is of equal value to himself. But its object is not less the protection of property, than that of persons; and from this double duty arises the necessity of limiting the right of election to those possessing the latter advantage.

In private life, men are never deceived on this subject. In the administration of any common fund, or the disposal of common property, it never was for a moment proposed to give the smallest shareholder an equal right with the greatest;—to give a creditor holding a claim for twenty shillings, for example, on a bankrupt estate, the same vote as one possessed of a bond for L.10,000. The injustice of such a proceeding is quite apparent. The interests

of the large shareholders would run the most imminent risk of being violated or neglected by those whose stake was so much more inconsiderable.

In the political world, the supposed or immediate interests of the great body of the people are not only different, but adverse to that of the possessors of property. To acquire, is the interest of the one; to retain, that of the other. Agrarian laws, and the equal division of property, or measures tending indirectly to that effect, will, in every age, be the wish of the unthinking multitude, who have nothing apparently to lose, and every thing to gain, by such convulsions. Their real and ultimate interests, indeed, will, in the end, inevitably suffer from such changes; but that is a remote consequence, which never will become obvious to the great body of mankind.

In the ordinary state of society, the superior intelligence and moral energy of the higher orders, give them the means of effectually controlling this natural, but dangerous tendency, on the part of their inferiors. But universal suffrage, or a low franchise, levels all the barriers, and reduces the contests of mankind to a mere calculation of numbers. In such a system, the vote of Napoléon, or Newton, has no more weight than that of an ignorant mechanic. Representatives elected under such a system are in reality nothing more than tribunes of the people, compelled to support the wishes of their constituents. The contests of party resolve themselves into a mere strife of contending interests. In periods of tranquillity, this petty warfare may produce only a selfish system of legislation; in moments of agitation it occasions an universal insurrection of the lower orders against the higher.

The Legislative Assembly. The truth of these observations was signally demonstrated in the history of the Legislative Assembly. By the enactments of their predecessors, the whole powers of sovereignty had been vested in the people; they had obtained what almost amounted to universal suffrage, and biennial elections; their representatives wielded despotic authority; they appointed their own magistrates, judges, and bishops; the military force of the state was in their hands; their delegates commanded the national guard, and ruled the armies. In possession of such unresisted authority, it was difficult to see what more they could desire, or what pretence could remain for insurrection against the government. Nevertheless, the legislature which they had themselves appointed, became, from the very first, the object of their dislike and jealousy; and the history of the Legislative Assembly is nothing more than the preparations for the revolt which overthrew the monarchy (1).

"This," says the republican historian, "is the natural progress of revolutionary troubles. Ambition, the love of power, first arises in the higher orders; they exert themselves, and obtain a share of the supreme authority. But the same passion descends in society; it rapidly gains an inferior class, until at length the whole mass is in movement. Satisfied with what they have gained, all persons of intelligence strive to stop; but it is no longer in their power, they are incessantly pressed on by the crowd in their rear. Those who thus endeavour to arrest the movement, even if they are but little elevated above the lowest class, if they oppose its wishes, are called an aristocracy, and incur its odium (2)."

Two unfortunate circumstances contributed, from the outset, to injure the formation of the Assembly. These were, the King's flight to Varennes, and the universal emigration of the nobles during the period of the primary elections.

(1) Lac. Fr. Hist. i. 178. Th. ii. 6, 7.

(2) Th. ii. 7.

The intelligence of the disappearance of the King, was received in most of the departments, at the very time of the election of the delegates who were to choose the deputies. Terror, distrust, and anxiety, seized every breast; a general explosion of the royal partisans was expected; foreign invasion, domestic strife, universal suffering, were imagined to be at hand. In this spirit the primary elections, or the nomination of the electoral colleges, took place. But before these delegates proceeded to name the deputies, the alarm had in some degree passed away; the seizure of the King had dissipated the causes of immediate apprehension; and the revolt of the Jacobins in the Champ-de-Mars had opened a new source of disquietude. Hence the nomination of the deputies was far from corresponding, in all instances, with the wishes of the original electors; the latter selected, for the most part, energetic, reckless men, calculated to meet the stormy times which were anticipated; the former strove to intersperse among them a few men of property, who might have an interest in maintaining the institutions which had been formed; the one elected to destroy, the other to preserve. The majority of the deputies were men inclined to support the constitution as it was now established; the majority of the original electors desirous of a more extensive revolution (1).

But there was one circumstance worthy of especial notice in the composition of this second assembly, which was its almost total separation from the property of the kingdom. In this respect it offered a striking contrast to the Constituent Assembly, which, though ruled by the Tiers-État after the pernicious union of the orders, yet numbered among its members some of the greatest proprietors and many of the noblest names in the kingdom. But in the Legislative Assembly there were not fifty persons possessed of L.400 a-year. The property of France was thus totally unrepresented, either directly by the influence of its holders in the elections, or indirectly by sympathy and identity of interest between the members of the Assembly and the class of proprietors. The Legislature was composed almost entirely of presumptuous and half-educated young men, clerks in counting-houses, or attorneys from provincial towns, who had risen to eminence during the absence of all persons possessed of property, and recommended themselves to public notice by the vehemence with which in the popular clubs they had asserted the principles of democracy. They had in general talent enough to make them both self-sufficient and dangerous, without either knowledge profound enough to moderate their views, or property adequate to steady their ambition. If a demon had selected a body calculated to consign a nation to perdition, his choice could not have been made more happily to effect his object (2).

Increased emigration of nobles. This deplorable result was in part, at least, owing to the flight of the nobility, so prolific in all its stages of disaster to France. The continued and increasing emigration of the landholders, contributed in the greatest degree to unhinge the public mind; and proved, perhaps, in the end, the greatest cause of the subsequent miseries of the Revolution. Their number was by this time, with their families, nearly one hundred thousand, of the most wealthy and influential body in France (3). All the roads to the Rhine were covered by haughty fugitives, whose inability for action was equalled only by the presumption of their language. They set their face from the first against every species of improvement; would admit of no compro-

(1) Th. i. 192.

(2) Burke. Thoughts on French Affairs, Works, vii. 51.

(3) Burke, viii. 72. Lac. i. 191.

mise with the popular party; and threatened their adversaries with the whole weight of European vengeance, if they persisted in demanding it. Coblenz became the great centre of the anti-revolutionary party; and to men accustomed to measure the strength of their force by the number of titles which it contained, a more formidable array could hardly be imagined. But it was totally deficient in the real weight of aristocratic assemblies, the number and spirit of their followers. The young and presumptuous nobility, possessing no estimable quality but their valour, were altogether unfit to cope with the moral energy and practical talent which had arisen among the the middling orders of France. The corps of the emigrants, though always forward and gallant, were too deficient in discipline and subordination to be of much importance in the subsequent campaigns, while their impetuous counsels too often betrayed their allies into unfortunate measures. Rashness of advice, and inefficiency of conduct have, with the exception of la Vendée, characterised all the military efforts of the royalist party in France, from the commencement to the termination of the Revolution.

Its disastrous effects. In thus deserting their country at the most critical period of its history, the French nobility betrayed equal baseness and imprudence; baseness, because it was their duty, under all hazards, to have stood by their sovereign, and not delivered him in fetters to a rebellious people; imprudence, because by joining the ranks of the stranger, and combating against their native country, they detached their own cause from that of France, and subjected themselves to the eternal reproach of bringing their country into danger for the sake of their separate and exclusive interests. The subsequent strength of the Jacobins was mainly owing to the successful appeals which they were always able to make to the patriotism of the people, and to the foreign wars which identified their rule with a career of glory; the royalists have never recovered the disgrace of having joined the armies of the enemy, and regained the throne at the expense of national independence. How different might have been the issue of events, if, instead of rousing fruitless invasions from the German states, the French nobility had put themselves at the head of the generous efforts of their own country; if they had shared in the glories of la Vendée, or combated under the walls of Lyon! Defeat, in such circumstances, would have been respected, success unsullied; by acting as they did, overthrow became ruin, and victory humiliation (1).

- October 1, 1791. Opening of the Assembly. The new Assembly opened its sittings on the 1st of October. An unfortunate event interrupted the harmony between them and the King. A deputation of sixty members was appointed to wait on Louis, but he did not receive them, and merely sent intimation by the minister of justice, that he would admit them on the following day at twelve o'clock. The meeting was cold and unsatisfactory on both sides. Shortly after, the King came in form to the Assembly; he was received with the greatest enthusiasm. His speech was directed chiefly to conciliation, and the maintenance of harmony between the different branches of the government. On this occasion, Louis experienced the strength of the republican principles, which, under the fostering hand of the Constituent Assembly, had made such rapid progress in France. They first decreed that the titles of Sire and Your Majesty should be dropped at the ensuing ceremonial; next, that the King should be seated on a chair similar in every respect to that of the President. When the monarch refused to come to the Assembly on these

(1) *Madame de Staël*, ii. 1, 9.

conditions, they yielded that point, but insisted on sitting down when he sat, which was actually done at its opening. The King was so much affected by this circumstance, that when he returned to the Queen, he threw himself on a chair, and burst into tears (4).

Though not anarchical, the Assembly was decidedly attached to the principles of democracy. The court and the nobles had exercised no sort of influence on the elections; the authority of the first was in abeyance; the latter had deserted their country. Hence, the parties in the Assembly were different from those in the Constituent. None were attached to the royal or aristocratic interests; the only question that remained, was the maintenance or the overthrow of the constitutional throne. "Et nous aussi, nous voulons faire une révolution," said one of the revolutionary members shortly after his election; and this, in truth, was the feeling of a large proportion of the electors, and a considerable portion of the deputies. The desire of novelty, the ambition of power, and a restless anxiety for change, had seized the minds of most of those who had not enjoyed a share in the formation of the first constitution. The object of the first supporters of the Revolution had already become, not to destroy the work of others, but to preserve their own. According to the natural progress of revolutionary changes, the democratic part of the first Assembly was the aristocratic of the second (2).

Parties in the Assembly.  
The members on the right, or the friends of the constitution, were called the *Feuillants*, from the club which formed the centre of their power. Lameth, Barnave, Duport, Damas, and Vaublanc, formed the leaders of this party. The national guard, the army, the magistrates of the departments, in general all the constituted authorities, were in their interest. But they had not the brilliant orators in their ranks who formed the strength of their adversaries; and the support of the people rapidly passed over to the attacking party (3).

Girondists. The Girondists, so called from the district near Bordeaux, from whence the most able of their party were elected, comprehended the Republicans of the Assembly, and represented that numerous and enthusiastic body in the state who longed after institutions on the model of antiquity. Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonne, Isnard, and Brissot, formed the splendid leaders of that interest, and from their powers of eloquence, and habits of thought, rapidly rose to celebrity. Brissot was at first the most popular of their leaders, from the influence of his journal, the *Patriote*, where he daily published to France the ideas which his prodigious mental activity had the preceding evening produced in the meetings of the municipality, in the National Assembly, or in the club of the Jacobins. Condorcet exercised the ascendant of a philosophic mind, which gave him nearly the place which Siéyes had held in the Constituent Assembly; while Pétion, calm and resolute, was the man of action of his party, and rapidly acquired the same dominion in the municipality of Paris, of which he was a member, which Bailly had obtained over the middling classes in the commencement of the Revolution. They flattered themselves that they had preserved republican virtue, because they were neither addicted to the frivolities, the expenses, nor the vices of the court; forgetting that the zeal of party, the love of power, and the ambition of popularity, may produce consequences more disastrous, and corruption as great, as the love of pleasure, the thirst of gold, or the ambition of kings. They fell at last under the attacks of a party more revolutionary

(1) Madame Campan, ii. 129. Mig. i. 147. Th. ii. 18, 19.

(2) Mig. i. 150. Toul. ii. 49. Lac. i. 192. Th. ii. 10, 11.

(3) Mig. i. 150, 151. Th. ii. 11, 12, 13.

and less humane than themselves, who, disregarding the graces of composition, and the principles of philosophy, were now assiduously employed in the arts of popularity, and becoming adepts in the infernal means of exciting the multitude (1).

Club of the  
Jacobins.

The leaders of this latter party in the Assembly were Chabot, Bazire, and Merlin; but it was not there that their real influence lay. The clubs of the Jacobins and the Cordeliers were the pillars of their authority; in the first, Robespierre, Billaud-Varrennes, and Collot-d'Herbois, ruled with absolute sway; the latter was under the dominion of Danton, Carrier, Desmoulins, and Fabre d'Églantine. Robespierre was excluded from the Assembly by the self-denying ordinance which he himself had proposed; but he had acquired an omnipotent sway at the Jacobins', by the extravagance of his opinions, the condensed energy of his language, and the reputation of integrity, which had already acquired for him the surname of the Incorruptible. In the Faubourg St.-Antoine, the brewer Santerre, well known in the bloodiest days of the Revolution, had obtained an undisputed ascendancy; while the municipality of Paris, elected according to the new system, by the universal suffrage of the inhabitants, had fallen, as might have been anticipated, into the hands of the most violent and least respectable of the demagogues (2). The importance of this body was not at first perceived; but possessing, as it did, the means of rousing at pleasure the strength of the capital, it soon acquired a preponderating influence, and was enabled to enthral a government which the armies of Europe sought in vain to subdue.

It is admitted by the republican writers, that at this period the King and Queen were sincerely inclined to support the constitution (3). In truth, Louis had great hopes of its success; and though he was not insensible to its faults, and desired its modification in several particulars, yet he trusted to time, and the returning good sense of the nation, to effect these changes, and was resolved to give it a fair trial. The Queen participated in the same sentiments; and, from the comparative tranquillity of the last year, began to entertain sanguine hopes that the anarchy of the nation might at length be stilled (4).

Contest  
with the  
church.  
Oct. 6,  
1791.

The first serious contest of the new Assembly was with the emigrants and the clergy. By one flagrant act of injustice, the Constituent Assembly had left the seeds of eternal discord between the revolutionary party and the Church. The sufferers, naturally, were indefatigable in their endeavours to rouse the people to support their cause. The bishops and priests exerted all their influence to stimulate the country population; and they succeeded, especially in the western provinces, in producing a most powerful sensation. Circular letters were dispatched to the curés of the parishes, and instructions generally transmitted to the people. The constitutional clergy were there represented as irregular and unholy; their performance of the sacraments impious and nugatory; marriage by them as nothing but concubinage; Divine vengeance as likely to follow an attendance on their service (5). Roused by these representations, the rural population in the districts of Calvados, Gévaudan, and la Vendée, broke into open disturbances.

Oct. 6

Brissot proposed to take instant and vigorous measures with the dissident clergy and refractory emigrants. "Every method of conciliation," said Isnard, "with these classes, is useless: what effect has followed all your

(1) Mig. i. 151. Dum. 381. Th. ii. 12.

(2) Mig. i. 152. Th. ii. 13, 15. Toul. ii. 93.

(3) Th. ii. 265.

(4) Bertrand de Molléville, vi. 22, et seq. Mad. Campan, ii. 261.

(5) Ferrière, i. 32. Mig. ii. 154. Th. ii. 27.



former indulgence towards them? Their audacity has risen in proportion to your forbearance : they will never cease to injure, till they lose the power of doing so. They must either be conquerors, or conquered ; matters have fairly come to that ; and he must be blind indeed, who does not see it in the clearest light (1)."

Debate on the emigrant. "The right of going from one country to another," said Brissot, "is one of the inherent rights of man ; but the right ceases when it becomes a crime. Can there be a more flagrant offence than that of emigrating, for the purpose of bringing on our country the horrors of foreign war? What other object have the crowds who now daily leave France? Hear their menaces, examine their conduct, read their libels, and you will see that what they call honour is what the universal voice of mankind has condemned as the height of baseness. Can we be ignorant, that at this moment the cabinets of Europe are besieged by their importunity, and possibly preparing to second their entreaties? Confidence is every day sinking ; the rapid fall of the assignats renders nugatory the best laid plans of finance. How is it possible to put a curb on the factions of the interior, when we suffer the emigrants to escape with impunity, who are about to bring the scourge of foreign war upon all our homes (2)?"

The constitutional party could not deny the justice of these alarms, but they strove to moderate the severity of the measures which were proposed to be adopted against the emigrants. "We are about," said they, "to put the sincerity of the King to too severe a trial, if we require him to adopt measures of severity against his nearest relations. Foreign powers can hardly be convinced that he really enjoys his freedom ; and is it by his consenting to such an act that their doubts are to be removed? What will be the effect of the extreme measures which are proposed? Are they likely to calm the passions, soothe the pride, or heal the wounds, which have been inflamed? They will bring back few of the absent, irritate many of the present. Time, distress, the frigid hospitality of strangers, the love of home, a sense of our justice, must be the means of restoring the love of their country in their bosoms ; by the proposed measures, you will extinguish it. The Constituent Assembly, more wise than ourselves, beheld with contempt those assemblages of discontented spirits on the frontier, who would be more really formidable, if exercising their spleen at home. A signal of alarm so sounded by us, would excite the jealousy of all the European powers, and really bring on those foreign dangers which would never have arisen from the supplications of our nobility. The pain of confiscation is odious in the most tyrannical states ; what must it be considered in a nation exercising the first rights of freedom? Are all the emigrants culpable in an equal degree? How many has fear rendered exiles from their country? Are you now to proclaim to the world, that these fears were well founded, to justify their desertion of France, and to demonstrate to mankind that the picture they have drawn of our government is nowise overcharged? Let us rather prove that their calumnies were unfounded, and silence their complaints by pursuing a conduct diametrically opposite to that which they anticipate (3)."

Decree against the emigrants. Oct. 30, 1791. The Assembly, influenced by the pressing dangers of emigration, disregarded all these considerations. Two decrees were passed, the first of which commanded the King's brother to return to France, under pain of being held to have abdicated his eventual right to the regency ;

(1) Mig. ii. 155. Th. ii. 274.

(2) Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 266.

(3) Lac. i. 207.

while the second declared all the French without the kingdom engaged in a conspiracy against the constitution; and subjected all those who should not return before the 1st of January to the penalty of death, and confiscation of their estates, under reservation of the rights of their wives, children, and creditors (1).

This proceeding on the part of the French Assembly cannot be better characterised than in the words of the eloquent author of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, who cannot be suspected of undue prejudice against the Revolution. "Examples of this kind," says Sir James Mackintosh, "are instances of that reckless tyranny which punishes the innocent to make sure of including the guilty, as well as of that refined cruelty, which, after rendering home odious, perhaps insupportable, pursues with unrelenting rage such of its victims as fly to foreign lands (2)."

Debate on the clergy. The disposal of the refractory clergy was the next object of the Assembly: it excited debates more stormy than those on the emigrants, in proportion as religious rancour is more bitter than civil dissension. "What are you about to do?" exclaimed the advocates of the clergy. "Have you, who have consecrated the freedom of worship, been the first to violate it? The declaration of the rights of man places it on a basis even more solemn than the constitution; and yet you seriously propose to subvert it? The Constituent Assembly, the author of so much good to France, has left this one schism as a legacy to its successors: close it, for God's sake; but do not widen the breach. To refuse an oath from a sense of duty can never be blamable; to take it from a desire of gain is alone disgraceful. Shall we deprive those, who decline from conscientious scruples, of the slender subsistence which they enjoy? Destroyers of political inequality, shall we re-establish a distinction more odious than any, by crushing to the dust a meritorious class of men? Who shall guarantee ourselves from similar spoliation, if we reduce to beggary the earliest supporters of the Revolution, those who first joined our standard after the immortal oath in the Tennis Court? Beware of driving to desperation a set of men still possessing extensive influence over the rural population. If you are dead to every sentiment of justice, yet pause before you adopt a measure so likely to awaken the flames of civil war in our bosoms." But the days of reason and justice were past. The leaders of the popular party all declared against the priests. Even Condorcet, the advocate of freedom of worship, was the first to support the violent measures proposed against them. It was resolved that all the clergy should be ordained instantly to take the oath to the constitution, under pain of being deprived of their benefices, and declared suspected of treason against the state. They were ordered to be moved from place to place, to prevent their acquiring any influence over their flocks, and imprisoned if they refused to obey. On no account were they to exercise any religious rites in private (3). Such was the liberty which the Revolution had already bestowed upon France—such its gratitude to its first supporters.

The adoption of these severe and oppressive enactments was signalized by the first open expression of irreligious or atheistical sentiments in the Assembly. "My god is the Law—I acknowledge no other," was the expression of one of the opponents of the church. The remonstrance of the constitutional bishops had no effect. These and similar expressions were loudly applauded, and the decree was carried in the midst of tumult and acclamation (4).

(1) Mig. i. 156. Lac. i. 208. Th. ii. 23, 24.

(2) Mackintosh's England, iii. 462.

(3) Th. ii. 28. Lac. i. 209. Mig. ii. 156.

(4) Lac. i. 209. Mig. ii. 156.

King refuses to sanction these decrees.

When these acts were submitted, agreeably to the constitution, to the King for his consideration, he sanctioned the first decree against the emigrants, but put his veto upon the last, and the one against the priests. He had previously, and openly censured his brother's desertion of the kingdom, and his disapproval of the general emigration of the noblesse was well known to all parties; but he was unwilling to give his sanction to the extreme measures which were now meditated against them. It was proposed in the council, that to pacify the people, whom it was well known the exercise of the veto would exasperate, the King should dismiss all his religious attendants, excepting those who had taken the oaths to the constitution; but, to this, Louis, though in general so flexible, opposed an invincible resistance, observing, that it would ill become those who had declared the right of every subject in the realm to liberty of conscience, to deny it to the sovereign alone. In acting thus firmly, he was supported by a large portion of the constitutional party, and by the directory of the department of Paris; and he stood much in need of their adhesion, in thus coming to open rupture with the people and the legislature (1).

Nov. 2.

The announcement of the King's refusal was received with very different impressions by the different parties in the Assembly. The Republicans could not disguise their satisfaction at a step which promised to embroil him still farther with the nation, and to give to their ambitious projects the weight of popular support. They congratulated the ministers in terms of irony on the decisive proof they had now given of the freedom of the throne. On the following morning, a severe proclamation from Louis appeared against the emigrants. The Feuillants animadverted upon it as an unconstitutional stretch of prerogative; the Jacobins, as too indulgent in its expressions (2).

Election of a Mayor of Paris.  
Nov. 17,  
1791.

The choice of a mayor for the city of Paris shortly after occupied the attention of the capital. La Fayette had retired from the command of the national guard, and was a candidate for that dignity. He was supported by the Constitutionals, while Pétion, the organ of the now united Girondists and Jacobins, was the favourite of the people. The court, jealous of La Fayette, who had never ceased to be the object of dislike, especially to the Queen, since the 5th October, had the imprudence to throw the weight of the crown into the scale for Pétion, and even to expend large sums of money for that purpose. "M. La Fayette," said the Queen, "aspires to the mayoralty, in the hope of soon becoming a mayor of the palace; Pétion is a Jacobin and a Republican, but he is a fool, incapable of rendering himself the head of a party." Pétion accordingly was elected, and threw the whole weight of his influence into the scale of the Revolution. On such miserable grounds did the court alienate the affections of the friends of a constitutional, and throw offices of trust into the hands of the supporters of a republican government (3).

Debate on the foreign powers and the emigrants.

Encouraged by this success, the Republicans openly aspired to still more important powers. The great object of their endeavours was to get the King involved in a foreign war, in the hope, which subsequent events so completely justified, that their cause being identified with that of national independence, would become triumphant. They expressed the utmost satisfaction at the firm tone adopted by the King in the proclamation against the emigrants. "Let us raise ourselves," said Isnard, "on this occasion, to the real dignity of our situation; let us speak to the

(1) Mig. ii. 157. Th. ii. 30, 31.

(2) Lac. i. 211.

(3) Mig. i. 158. i. 94, 95.

ministers, to the King, to Europe in arms, with the firmness which becomes us : let us tell the former that we are not satisfied with their conduct; that they must make their election between public gratitude and the vengeance of the laws; and that by vengeance we mean death. Let us tell the King that his interest is to defend the constitution; that he reigns by the people and for the people; that the nation is his sovereign, and that he is the subject of the law. Let us tell Europe, that if the French nation draws the sword, it will throw away the scabbard; that it will not again seek it till crowned by the laurels of victory; that if cabinets engage kings in a war against the people, we will rouse the people to mortal strife with sovereigns. Let us tell them, that the combats in which the people engage by order of despots, resemble the strife of two friends under cloud of night, at the instigation of a perfidious emissary; when the dawn appears, and they recognise each other, they throw away their arms, embrace with transport, and turn their vengeance against the author of their discord. Such will be the fate of our enemies, if, at the moment when their armies engage with ours, the light of

Dec. 14, 1791.

philosophy strikes their eyes." Transported by these ideas, the Assembly *unanimously* adopted the proposed measure of addressing the throne. Vaublanc was the organ of their deputation. "No sooner," said he, "did the Assembly cast their eyes on the state of the kingdom, than they perceived that the troubles which agitate it have their source in the criminal preparations of the French emigrants. Their audacity is supported by the German princes, who, forgetting the faith of treaties, openly encourage their armaments, and compel counter-preparations on our part, which absorb the sums destined to the liquidation of the debt. It is your province to put a stop to these evils, and hold to foreign powers the language befitting a King of the French. Tell them, that wherever preparations of war are carried on, there France beholds nothing but enemies; that we will religiously observe peace on our side; that we will respect their laws, their usages, their constitutions; but that if they continue to favour the armaments destined against the French, France will bring into their bosoms not fire and sword, but freedom. It is for them to calculate the consequences of such a wakening of their people."

Dec. 1. 1791.

The King promised to take the message of the Assembly into the most serious consideration, and a few days after came in person to the Chamber, and announced that he had notified to the Elector of Treves and the other Electors, that if they did not, before the 15th January, put an end to the military preparations in their states, he would regard them as enemies; and that he had written to the Emperor, to call upon him as the head of the empire, to prevent the disastrous consequences of a war. "If these remonstrances," he concluded, "are not attended to, nothing will remain but to declare war,—a step which a people who have renounced the idea of conquest will never take without absolute necessity, but from which a generous and free nation will not shrink when called by the voice of honour and public safety." Loud applauses followed these words; and it was already manifest that the revolutionary energy was turning into its natural channel, warlike achievement (1).

Preparations for war.

These declarations were followed by serious preparations. Narbonne, a young and enterprising man of the Feuillants, was appointed minister at war; and immediately set out for the frontiers. One hundred and fifty thousand men were put in immediate requisition, and twenty millions of francs (L.800,000) voted for that purpose. Three armies

were organised, one under the command of Rochambeau, one of Luckner, one of La Fayette. The Count d'Artois, and the Prince of Condé, were accused of conspiring against the security of the state and of the constitution, and their estates put under sequestration. Finally, the Count de Provence, afterwards Louis XVIII, not having obeyed the requisition to return to the kingdom within the appointed time, was deprived of his right to the regency (1).

The Elector of Treves obeyed the requisition; but the Emperor of Austria, though naturally pacific, and totally unprepared for war, gave orders to his general, the Marshal of Bender, to defend the elector if he was attacked, and insisted that the rights of the feudal lords should be re-established in Alsace. Mean-while the imperial troops were put in motion; fifty thousand men were stationed in the Low Countries; six thousand in the Brisgaw; thirty thousand ordered for Bohemia (2).

The Emperor wishes to avoid war.

The Emperor Leopold was extremely averse to a contest, for which he was unprepared, and which he was well aware was hostile to his interests. His object was to establish a congress, and adjust the disputed points with France in such a manner as might satisfy all parties. He was aware of the necessity of maintaining the constitutional system entire in its material parts, but wished to restore to the throne some of its lost prerogatives, and divide the legislature into two Chambers,—alterations which experience has proved it would have been well for France if she could have imposed on her turbulent and impassioned people (3).

Opposed by Robespierre.

Brissot was the decided advocate for war in the Club of the Jacobins; his influence on that subject was long counterbalanced by that of Robespierre, who dreaded above all things the accession of strength which his political opponents might receive from the command of the armies. "Beware," said he, in the Jacobin Club, "you who have so long guarded against the perfidy of the court, of now becoming the unconscious instruments of its designs. Brissot is clear for war; I ask you where are your armies, your fortresses, your magazines? What! shall we believe that the court, which, in periods of tranquillity, is incessantly engaged in intrigues, will abstain from them when it obtains the lead of our armies? I see clearly the signs of perfidy, not only in those who are to proclaim war, but in those who advise it. Every one must perceive, that the efforts of the emigrants to rouse foreign powers are utterly nugatory. Are you to be the party, by a hasty measure, to compel them to adopt vigorous steps? I affirm, without the fear of contradiction, that the blood of our soldiers is sold by traitors. The more I meditate on the chances of war, the more my mind is filled with the most gloomy presages. Already I see the men, who basely shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on the Champ-de-Mars, at the head of the armies. What guarantee am I offered against such appalling dangers? The patriotism of Brissot and Condorcet! I know not if it is true; I know not if it is sincere; but I know well that it is tardy. I have seen them worship M. La Fayette; they made a show of resistance at the time of his odious success; but they have since upheld his fortunes, and evinced but too plainly that they were participant in his designs against the public weal (4).

Change of ministry.

While these divisions were going on among the revolutionary party, the ministers of the King were daily declining in influence. Divided among themselves, they were unable to withstand the incessant attacks of the Assembly and the patriot clubs. The one-half, led by Delessart

(1) Mig. i. 162. Lac. i. 217. Th. ii. 39, 40.

(2) Lac. i. 163. Th. ii. 41.

(3) Bouillé, ii. 299, 309. Th. ii. 41.

(4) Lac. i. 216, 217. Th. ii. 47, 49.

and Bertrand de Molleville, were inclined to the aristocratic; the other, headed by Narbonne and Cahier de Gerville, to the democratic side. Sensible of the weakness of their adversaries, the popular leaders in the Assembly pushed their advantages, and preferred an accusation against the two former of the Ministry. Though they were baffled for some time by the ability and presence of mind of Bertrand de Molleville, yet at length the King was obliged to yield, and make a total change in his councils (1).

The principle adopted in the formation of the new Ministry was the same as that acted on in similar extremities by Charles I, to divide the opposition, by the selection of the least intemperate of its members. Roland was made minister of the interior; Dumouriez received the portfolio of foreign affairs; Lacoste, Clavière, Duranton, and Servan, were severally appointed to the marine, the finances, the judicatory, and war (2).

Character of Dumouriez. Dumouriez was forty-seven years of age when he was called to this important situation. He had many of the qualities of a great man : abilities; an enterprising character; indefatigable activity; impetuosity of disposition; confidence in his own fortune; a steady and rapid *coup-d'œil*. Fertile in resources, pliant in temper, engaging in conversation, unbounded in ambition, he was eminently qualified to rise to distinction in periods of civil commotion. But these great mental powers were counterbalanced by others of an opposite tendency. A courtier before 1789, a constitutionalist under the first Assembly, a Girondist under the second, he seemed inclined to change with every wind that blew, in the constant desire to raise himself to the head of affairs. Volatile, fickle, inconsiderate, he adopted measures too hastily to ensure success; veering with all the changes of the times, he wanted the ascendancy of a powerful, and the weight of a virtuous character. Had he possessed, with his own genius, the firmness of Bouillé, the passions of Mirabeau, or the dogmatism of Robespierre, he might for a time have ruled the Revolution. An admirable partizan, he was a feeble leader of a party; well qualified to play the part of Antony, or Alcibiades, he was unfit to follow the steps of Cæsar or Cromwell (3).

OF M. and Madame Roland. Austere in character, simple in manners, firm in principle, Roland was in every respect the reverse of Dumouriez. His disposition had nothing in common with the age in which he lived; he brought to the government of France, in the eighteenth century, the integrity and simplicity of the Sabine farm. A steady republican, he was well qualified for a quiescent, but ill for an incipient state of freedom; uncompromising in his principles, unostentatious in his manners, unambitious in his inclination, he would probably never have emerged from the seclusion of private life, but for the splendid abilities, and brilliant character of his wife. Impassioned in disposition, captivating in manner, unrivalled in conversation, this remarkable woman united the graces of the French to the elevation of the Roman character. Born in the middling ranks, her manners, though without the ease of dignified birth, yet conferred distinction on an elevated station : surrounded by the most fascinating society in France, she preserved unsullied the simplicity of domestic life. She had as much virtue as pride, as much ambition as private worth. Her sensitive temperament could not endure the constant attacks made on her husband at the tribune, and she replied, perhaps with undue warmth, in articles in pamphlets and public journals which bore her husband's name. An ardent admirer of antiquity, she wept, while

(1) Mig. i. 164. Lac. i. 218, 219.

(2) Mig. i. 164. Lac. i. 224. Th. ii. 57, 58.

(3) Mig. i. 164. Lac. i. 224. Th. ii. 59.

yet in infancy, that she was not born a Roman citizen. She lived to witness misfortunes greater than were known to ancient states, and to bear them with more than Roman constancy (1).

The court named the new Ministry, "Le Ministère sans-culotte." The first time that Roland presented himself at the palace, he was dressed with strings in his shoes, and a round hat. The master of the ceremonies refused to admit him in such an unwonted costume, not knowing who he was; but being afterwards informed, and in consequence obliged to do so, he turned to Dumouriez, and said with a sigh, "Ah, sir, no buckles in his shoes!"—"All is lost!" replied the minister of foreign affairs, with sarcastic irony (2).

March 17.  
1792.  
State of  
foreign  
affairs. The first duty of the new ministry was to prepare for a war. The situation of foreign affairs became daily more menacing. The aged and pacific Leopold was just dead; and his successor, Francis II, young and inexperienced, was not likely to be influenced by his circumspection. Austria was collecting her troops, and placing garrisons in situations calculated to menace the district of the Jura; the assemblage of emigrants at Coblenz had been renewed with more vigour than ever; and military preparations, though on a limited scale, were going forward in the Low Countries. The ultimatum on which Austria agreed to discontinue her preparations, was the re-establishment of the monarchy on the footing on which it was put by the declaration of 23d June, 1789; the restitution of their property to the clergy; the cession of Alsace, with all its senorial rights, to the German Princes, and of Avignon to the Pope. These terms were deemed wholly inadmissible by the revolutionary leaders, and it was evident to all parties that a contest was inevitable (3).

War desired  
by all parties  
in France. All classes in France were equally anxious for war. The Royalists hoped every thing from the invasion of the German powers; the superiority of their discipline, the number of their armies, led them to anticipate an immediate march to Paris, and the final extinction of the revolutionary mania, from which they had suffered so much. The Constitutionalists, worn out with the painful struggle they had so long maintained with their domestic enemies, expected to regain their ascendancy by the influence of the army, and the experienced necessity of military discipline. The Democrats eagerly desired the excitation and tumult of campaigns, from all the chances of which they hoped to derive advantage: victorious, they looked to the establishment of their principles in foreign states; vanquished, they anticipated the downfall of the constitutionalists, and their own installation in their stead (4).

20th April,  
1792.  
The king  
yields  
against his  
own judgment. Pressed alike by his friends, his ministers, and his enemies, Louis was at length compelled to take the fatal step. On the 20th April, he repaired to the Assembly, and after a long exposition by Dumouriez, of the grounds of complaint against Austria; the secret tenor of the conferences of Mantua, Reichenbach, and Pilnitz; the coalition of kings, formed to arrest the progress of the Revolution; the open protection given to the troops of the emigrants; and the intolerable conditions of the ultimatum; pronounced, with a tremulous voice, these irrevocable words:—"You have heard, gentlemen, the result of my negotiations with the court of Vienna: they are conformable to the sentiments more than once

never get a glimpse of any thing but the petticoats of his wife."—*Hist. de la Convention*, i. 38.

(2) *Mig. i. 166. Th. ii. 65.*

(3) *Mig. ii. 167. Lac. i. 226. Th. ii. 70, 72.*

(4) *Lac. i. 228. Th. ii. 47, 49.*

(1) Roland's Memoirs, i. 32. *Mig. i. 165. Th. ii. 63, 64. Lac. i. 225. Hist. de la Conv. i. 38.*

She was, however, too active and enterprising for a statesman's wife. "When I wish to see the minister of the interior," said Condorcet, "I can

expressed to me by the National Assembly, and confirmed by the great majority of the kingdom. All prefer a war to the continuance of outrages to the national honour, or menaces to the national safety. I have exhausted all the means of pacification in my power; I now come, in terms of the constitution, to propose to the Assembly, that we should declare war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia." This declaration was received in silence, interrupted only by partial applause. How unanimous soever the members were in approving the declaration of the King, they were too deeply impressed with the solemnity and grandeur of the occasion, to give vent to any noisy ebullition of feeling. In the evening, on a meeting specially convened for the occasion, war was almost unanimously agreed to (1).

A large proportion of the most enlightened men in the Assembly, including Condorcet, Clavière, Roland, and de Graves, disapproved of this step, and yet voted for it—a striking proof of the manner in which, in troubled times, the more moderate and rational party are swept along by the daring measures of more vehement and reckless men (2).

The King was well aware that the interests of his family could not be benefited, but necessarily must be injured by the events of the war, whatever they might be; if victorious, the people would be more imperious in their demands, and more difficult for the crown to govern; vanquished, he would be accused of treachery, and made to bear the load of public indignation. So strongly was he impressed by these considerations, and so thoroughly convinced that his conduct, in agreeing to this war, might hereafter be made the subject of accusation at the trial which he was well aware was approaching, that he drew up a record of the proceedings of the council, where he delivered his opinions against the war, and after getting it signed by all the ministers, deposited it in the iron closet which about this time he had secretly made in the wall of his apartments in the Tuileries, to contain the most important papers in his possession, both those calculated to found a charge against him, and support his defence when brought to trial. The closet, with its contents, was afterwards betrayed by the treachery of the blacksmith who was employed to make it (3).

Thus commenced the greatest, the most bloody, and the most interesting war, which has agitated mankind since the fall of the Roman empire. Rising from feeble beginnings, it at length involved the world in its conflagration; involving the interests, and rousing the passions of every class of the people, it brought unheard-of armies into the field, and was carried on with a degree of exasperation unknown in civilized times. But from this strife of principle, as well as interest, the fair fabric of civil liberty is destined, let us hope, at length to emerge, if not in the country where it arose, at least elsewhere in the world; and in the efforts both of sovereigns to crush and demagogues to madden its spirit, are to be found the means by which wisdom is taught and moderation finally impressed upon the masses of the people, and a better temper induced by the sufferings than can ever arise from the unbroken prosperity of mankind.

The intelligence of the declaration of war was received with joy by all France, and by none more so than by those districts which were destined to suffer most from its ultimate effects. The Jacobins beheld in it the termination of their apprehensions occasioned by the emigrants, and the uncertain conduct of the King. The Constitutionalists hoped that the common danger

(1) *Mig.* i. 168. *Lac.* ii. 228. *Th.* ii. 75, 76.  
(2) *Dumont*, 418.

(3) *M. Campau*, ii. 222. *Th.* ii. 73.



would unite all the factions which now distracted the commonwealth, while the field of battle would mow down the turbulent characters whom the Revolution had brought forth. A few of the Feuillants only reproached the Assembly with having violated the constitution, and begun a war of aggression, which could not fail in the end to terminate fatally for France (1).

It communicated a new impulse to the public mind, already so strongly excited. The districts, the municipalities, and the clubs, wrote addresses to the Assembly, congratulating them on having vindicated the national honour; arms were prepared, pikes forged, gifts provided, and the nation seemed impatient only to receive its invaders. But the efforts of patriotism, strong as an auxiliary to a military force, are seldom able to supply its place. The first combats were all unsuccessful to the French arms; and, it will more than once appear in the sequel, that had the allies acted with more decision and pressed on to Paris before military experience had been superadded to the enthusiasm of their adversaries, there can be no doubt that the war might have been terminated in a single campaign (2).

Two events occupied the attention of the Assembly about this time in different quarters, which evinced the perilous nature of the principles which were now promulgated from the French capital.

Massacre of Avignon. The first of these was the massacre of Avignon. This city had been the theatre of bloody events ever since the period of its union with France. This encroachment upon the rights of the Holy See, had been consented to with extreme reluctance by Louis, and never thoroughly acquiesced in by the inhabitants. Two parties, one favourable, the other opposed to the incorporation, divided the city. The latter had murdered Lecuyer, secretary to the municipality, at the foot of the altar, whither he had fled for refuge. The revenge of the popular party was slow, but not the less atrocious. In Oct. 30, 1792. silence they collected their forces, and at length, when all assistance was absent, surrounded the city. The gates were closed, the walls guarded so as to render escape impossible, and a band of assassins sought out, in their own houses, the individuals destined for death. Sixty unhappy wretches were speedily thrust into prison, where, during the obscurity of night, the murderers wreaked their vengeance with impunity. One young man put fourteen to death with his own hand, and at length only desisted from excess of fatigue; the father was brought to witness the massacre of his children; the children of the father, to aggravate their sufferings: twelve women perished after having undergone tortures worse than death itself; an old priest, remarkable for a life of beneficence, who had escaped, was pursued, and sacrificed by the objects of his bounty. When vengeance had done its worst, the remains of the victims were torn and mutilated, and heaped up in a ditch, or thrown into the Rhone (3).

The recital of these atrocities excited the utmost commiseration in the Assembly. Cries of indignation arose on all sides; the President fainted after reading the letter which communicated its details. But this, like almost all the other crimes of the popular party during the progress of the Revolution, remained unpunished. The Legislature, after some delay, felt it necessary to proclaim an amnesty, and some of the authors of this massacre afterwards fell the victims, on 31st May, of the sanguinary passions of which they had given so cruel an example. In a revolution, the ruling power, themselves supported by the populace, can seldom punish their excesses; the period of reaction must be waited for before it can in general be attempted (4).

(1) Th. ii. 77.

(2) Mig. i. 169. Toul. ii. 121. Th. ii. 79.

(3) Lac. i. 213. Toul. ii. 97.

(4) Lac. i. 213.

Dreadful  
Insurrection  
of St.-Do-  
mingo.

The second catastrophe, more extensive in its operation, yet more terrible in its details, was the revolt of St.-Domingo. The slaves in that flourishing colony, agitated by the intelligence which they received of the levelling principles of the Constituent Assembly, had early manifested symptoms of insubordination. The Assembly, divided between the desire of enfranchising so large a body of men, and the evident dangers of such a step, had long hesitated on the course they should adopt, and were inclined to support the rights of the planters. But the passions of the Negroes were excited by the efforts of a society, styled "The Society of Friends of the Blacks," of which Brissot was the leading member; and the mulattoes were induced by their injudicious advice to organize an insurrection. They trusted that they would be able to control the ferocity of the slaves even during the heats of a revolt; they little knew the dissimulation and cruelty of the savage character. An universal revolt was planned and organized, without the slightest suspicion on the part of the planters, and the same night fixed on for its breaking out over the whole island (1).

October 30,  
1791. At length, at midnight, on the 30th October, the insurrection broke forth. In an instant twelve hundred coffee, and two hundred sugar plantations, were in flames; the buildings, the machinery, the farm-offices, reduced to ashes, the unfortunate proprietors hunted down, murdered, or thrown into the flames by the infuriated Negroes. The horrors of a servile war universally appeared. The unchained African signalized his ingenuity by the discovery of new and unheard-of modes of torture. An unhappy planter was sawed asunder between two boards; the horrors inflicted on the women exceeded any thing known even in the annals of Christian ferocity. The indulgent master was sacrificed equally with the inhumane; on all alike, young and old, rich and poor, the wrongs of an oppressed race were indiscriminately wreaked. Crowds of slaves traversed the country with the heads of the white children affixed on their pikes; they served as the standards of these furious assemblages (2). In a few instances only, the humanity of the Negro character resisted the savage contagion of the time; and some faithful slaves, at the hazard of their own lives, fed in caves their masters or their children, whom they had rescued from destruction.

The intelligence of these disasters excited an angry discussion in the Assembly. Brissot, the most vehement opponent of slavery, ascribed them all to the refusal of the blessings of freedom to the Negroes; the moderate members, to the inflammatory addresses circulated among them by the Anti-Slavery Society of Paris. At length it was agreed to concede the political rights for which they contended to the men of colour; and in consequence of that resolution, St.-Domingo obtained the nominal blessings of freedom (3). But it is not thus that the great changes of nature are conducted; a child does not acquire the strength of manhood in an hour, or a tree the consistency of the hardy denizens of the forest in a season. The hasty philanthropists who conferred upon an ignorant slave population the precipitate gift of freedom, did them a greater injury than their worst enemies. The black population remain to this day, in St.-Domingo, a memorable example of the ruinous effect of precipitate emancipation. Without the steady habits of civilized society; ignorant of the wants which reconcile to a life of labour; destitute of the support which a regular government might have afforded, they have brought to the duties of cultivated life the habits of savage life. To the indolence of the Negro character they have joined the vices of European cor-

(1) Toul. ii. 98. Lac. i. 214.

(2) Lac. i. 214. Toul. ii. 98.

(3) Lac. i. 215. Toul. ii. 98.

ruption; profligat , idle, and disorderly, they have declined both in numbers and in happiness; from being the greatest sugar plantation in the world, the island has been reduced to the necessity of importing that valuable produce; and the inhabitants, naked and voluptuous, are fast receding into the state of nature from which their ancestors were torn, two centuries ago, by the rapacity of Christian avarice (1).

Meanwhile the disasters of the armies, the natural effect of thirty years' unbroken continental peace, and recent license and insubordination, produced the utmost consternation in Paris. The power of the Jacobins was rapidly increasing; their affiliated societies were daily extending their ramifications throughout France, and the debates of the parent club shook the kingdom from one end to another. They accused the Royalists of having occasioned the defeats, by raising treasonable cries of *Sauve qui peut*; the Aristocrats could not dissemble their joy at events which promised shortly to bring the allied armies to Paris, and restore the ancient *r gime*; the generals attributed their disasters to Dumouriez, who had planned the campaign; he ascribed every thing to the defective mode in which his orders had been executed. Distrust and recrimination universally prevailed (2).

Royal guard disbanded. In this extremity, the Assembly took the most energetic measures for ensuring their own authority and the public safety. They declared their sittings permanent, disbanded the guard of the King, which had excited the popular jealousy, and passed a decree condemning the refractory clergy to exile. To secure the capital from insult, they directed the formation of a camp of twenty thousand men near Paris, and sought to maintain the enthusiasm of the people by Revolutionary *f tes*, and increase their efficiency by arming them with pikes. The disbanding of the royal guard was carried only by a small majority and in spite of the most violent opposition. "The veil," said Girardin, "is now withdrawn; the insurrection against the throne is no longer disguised. We are called on, in a period of acknowledged public danger, to remove the last constitutional protection from the crown. Why are we always told of the dangers to be apprehended from the royalist faction? a party weak in numbers, despicable in influence, whom it would be so easy to subdue. I see two factions, and a double set of dangers, and one advances by hasty strides to a regicide government. Would to God my anticipations may prove unfounded! But I cannot shut my eyes to the striking analogy of the two countries: I cannot forget that, in a similar crisis, the Long Parliament disbanded the guard of Charles I. What fate awaited that unhappy monarch? What now awaits the constitutional sovereign of the French (3)?"

The royal guard was remodelled after its dissolution; the officers in part chosen from a different class, the staff put into different hands, and companies of pikemen introduced from the faubourgs to neutralize the loyalty of their fellow-soldiers. The constitutional party made the most vigorous remonstrances against these hazardous innovations. But their efforts were vain: the approach of danger and the public agitation had thrown the whole weight of government into the hands of the Jacobins (4).

The evident peril of his situation roused the pacific King into more than

(1) The details of this dreadful insurrection, with a full account of the subsequent history of St. Domingo, will be given in a succeeding chapter, which treats of the expedition of Napoleon to that island. It is not the least important period of the eventful era. Vide *infra*, Chap. xxxvii.

(2) Mig. i. 171. Toul. ii. 121. Lac. i. 233. Th. ii. 80, 81.

(3) Lac. i. 234. Mig. i. 172.

(4) Mig. i. 172. Th. ii. 87.

usual vigour. His ministers were incessantly urging him to give his sanction to the decree of exile against the non-juring priests, and to admit the constitutional clergy free access to his person, in order to remove all ground for complaint on the score of religion. But on these points Louis was immovable. Indifferent to personal danger, comparatively insensible to the diminution of the royal prerogative, he was resolutely determined to make no compromise with his religious duties. By degrees he became estranged from the party of the Gironde, and remained several days without addressing them, or letting them know his determination in that particular. It was then that Madame

June 10. Roland wrote, in name of her husband, the famous letter to the King, in which she strongly urged him to become with sincerity a constitutional monarch, and put an end to the public troubles, by sanctioning the decrees against the priests. This letter, written with much eloquence, but in too republican a spirit, excited the anger of Louis, and Servan, Roland, and Clavière, were dismissed with marked expressions of dissatisfaction (1).

June 12, 1792. Dumouriez endeavoured to take advantage of these events to elevate his own power in the administration. He consented to remain in the ministry, and separate himself from his friends, on condition that the King should sanction the decree against the priests. But Louis persisted in his refusal to ratify these decrees, or the formation of a camp of twenty thousand men at Paris. "You should have thought," said Dumouriez, "of these objections, before you agreed to the first decree of the Constituent Assembly, which enjoined the clergy to take the oaths."—"I was wrong then," answered the King; "I will not commit such an error on a second occasion." Dumouriez, after having lost the confidence of his party, found himself compelled to set out for the army, where he soon acquired a more lasting reputation as a general (2). The Assembly broke out into the most furious invectives against the court, upon the dismissal of the popular ministers, and declared that they carried with them the regrets of the nation.

New ministry from the Feuillants. The new ministry were chosen from among the Feuillants. Scipion Chambonnas and Terrier Monciel were appointed to the foreign affairs and the finances; but they were without consideration either with their party or the country. The crown lost the support of the only men in France who were sincere in their belief that they would advance the cause of freedom by means of the Revolution, at the very moment that its most violent excesses were about to break out. The King was so much disconcerted at the proved impossibility of forming an efficient administration, that he fell into a state of mental depression, which he had never experienced since the commencement of the public disturbances. For ten days together he hardly articulated a word, and seemed so completely overwhelmed, as to have lost almost the physical power of motion. The Queen, whose energy nothing could subdue, at length extricated him from that deplorable state, by throwing herself at his feet, and conjuring him, by the duty he owed to her and their children, to summon up more resolution; and if death was unavoidable, to perish with honour combating for their rights, rather than remain to be stifled within the walls of the palace (3).

But if this heroic princess thus exerted herself to rouse the spirit of the King, it was not because she was either ignorant of, or insensible to, the dangers which surrounded her. In the palace of the Tuileries, where she was virtually confined as a prisoner, the cannoneers of the guard openly

(1) Mig. i. 173. Lac. i. 239.

(2) Lac. i. 240, Mig. i. 173. Th. ii. 103, 104.

(3) Madame Campan, ii. 205. Lac. i. 240. Mig. i. 174.

insulted her when she appeared at the windows, and expressed in the most brutal language their desire to see her head on the point of their bayonets. The gardens of the palace were the scenes of every species of disorder. In one quarter, a popular orator was to be seen pouring forth treason and sedition to an enraptured audience; in another, an ecclesiastic was thrown down, and beaten with merciless severity; while the people, with thoughtless confidence, pursued their walks round the marbled parterres, as if they had no interest in the insults which were levelled at religion and the throne (1).

The King at this time had opened a secret correspondence with the Allied Courts, in the view of directing and moderating their measures in advancing for his deliverance. For this purpose he had dispatched M. Mallet du Pan to Vienna, with instructions written with his own hand, in which he recommended that they should advance into the French territory with the utmost caution, show every indulgence to the inhabitants, and cause their march to be preceded by a manifesto, in which they should avow the most moderate and conciliatory dispositions. The original document remains a precious monument of the wisdom and patriotic spirit of that unhappy sovereign. It is remarkable that he recommends, in order to separate the ruling faction of the Jacobins from the nation, exactly the same language and conduct which was, throughout the whole period, strenuously recommended by Mr. Burke, and was twenty years afterwards employed with so much success by the Emperor Alexander and the allied sovereigns, to detach the French people from the standards of Napoléon (2).

Alarmed at the evident danger of the monarchy, the friends of the constitution used the most vigorous means to repress the growing spirit of insubordination, and support the throne. Lally Tollendal and Malouet, of the ancient monarchical party, united with the leaders of the Feuillants, Duport, Lameth, and Barnave, for this purpose. La Fayette, who was employed on the frontier at the head of the army, employed his immense influence for June 16. the same object. From the camp at Maubeuge, he wrote, on the 16th June, an energetic letter to the Assembly, in which he denounced the Jacobin faction, demanded the dissolution of the Clubs, the emancipation and establishment of a constitutional throne; and conjured the Assembly, in the name of itself, of the army, and of all the friends of

(1) Dumont, iii. 6.

(2) Bertrand de Molleville, viii. 38, 39. Th. ii. 109.

The King recommended that the Emperor and King of Prussia should publish a proclamation, in which they should declare, "that they were obliged to take up arms to resist the aggression made upon them, which they ascribed neither to the King nor the nation, but to the criminal faction which domineered alike over the one and the other: that, in consequence, far from departing from the friendly feelings which they entertained towards the King of France, their Majesties had taken up arms only to deliver him and the nation from an atrocious tyranny, which equally oppressed both, and to enable them to re-establish freedom upon a secure foundation: that they had no intentions of intermeddling in any form with the internal government of the nation, but only desired to restore to it the power of choosing that which really was in accordance with the wishes of the great majority: that they had no thoughts whatever of foreign conquest: that individual should be not less protected than national property: that their Majesties took under their especial safeguard all faithful and

peaceable citizens, and declared war only against those who now ruled with a rod of iron all who aimed at the establishment of freedom." In pursuance of these principles, he besought the emigrants to take no part in the war; to avoid every thing which could give it the appearance of a contest between one nation and another; and urged the allies to appear as parties, not arbiters, in the contest between the crown and the people: warning them that any other conduct "would infallibly endanger the lives of the King and royal family, overturn the throne, lead to the massacre of the Royalists; rally to the Jacobins all the Revolutionists, who were daily becoming more alienated from them; revive an excitation which was fast declining, and render more obstinate a national resistance, which would yield at the first reverse, if the nation was only convinced that the fate of the Revolution was not wound up in the destruction of those who had hitherto been its victims." This holograph document was dated in June 1792, two months before the 10th August. There is not a more striking monument of political wisdom and foresight on record in modern times.—See BERTRAND DE MOLLEVILLE, viii, 37—39.

liberty, to confine themselves to strictly legal measures. This letter had the success which may be anticipated for all attempts to control a revolution by those who have been instrumental in producing it; it excited the most violent dissatisfaction, destroyed the popularity of the writer, and was totally nugatory in calming the populace (1).

The Girondists plan a revolt of the populace.

The Girondists, chagrined at the loss of their places in the Administration, proceeded to the most ruinous excesses. They experienced now that cruel necessity to which all who seek to rise by the passions of the people are sooner or later subjected, that of submitting to the vices, and allying themselves with the brutality of the mob. They openly associated with, and flattered men of the most revolting habits and disgusting vulgarity, and commenced that system of revolutionary equality which was so soon to banish politeness, humanity, and every gentler virtue from French society (2). They resolved to rouse the people by inflammatory petitions and harangues, and hoped to intimidate the court by the show of popular resistance,—a dangerous expedient, and which in the end proved as fatal to them as to the power against which it was directed. A general insurrection under their guidance was prepared in the faubourgs, and, under the pretence of celebrating the anniversary of the Tennis Court oath, which was approaching, a body of ten thousand men was organised in the quarter of St.-Antoine. Thus, while the Royalists were urging the approach of the European powers (3), the patriots were rousing the insurrection of the people. Both produced their natural effects—the Reign of Terror, and the despotism of Napoléon.

Disgraceful tumult on the 20th June.

On the 20th June, a tumultuous body, ten thousand strong, secretly organized by Pétion, Mayor of Paris, and the practical leader of the Girondists, set out from the Faubourg St.-Antoine, and directed itself towards the Assembly. It was the first attempt to overawe the legislature by the display of mere brute force. The deputation was introduced into the hall, while the doors were besieged by a clamorous multitude. They spoke in the most violent and menacing manner, declaring that they were resolved to avail themselves of the means of resistance in their power, and which were recognised in the Declaration of Rights. The petition declared,—“The people are ready; they are fully prepared to have recourse to any measures to put in force the second article of the Rights of Man,—resistance to oppression. Let the small minority of your body who do not participate in their sentiments, deliver the earth from their presence, and retire to Coblenz. Examine the causes of our sufferings: If they flow from the royal authority, let it be annihilated. The executive power,” it concluded, “is at variance with you. We desire no other proof than the dismissal of the popular ministers. Does the happiness of the people, then, depend on the caprice of the sovereign? Should that sovereign have any other law than the will of the people? The people are determined, and their pleasure outweighs the wishes of crowned heads. They are the oak of the forest; the royal sapling must bend beneath its branches. We complain of the inactivity of our armies; we call upon you to investigate its causes; if it arises from the executive power, see that it be instantly annihilated (4).”

This revolutionary harangue was supported by the authors of the movement in the Assembly. Guadet, a popular leader of the Gironde, exclaimed, “Who will dare now to renew the bloody scene, when, at the close of the

(1) Lac. i. 240, Mig. i. 175. Th. ii. 116.

(2) Dumont, 388.

(3) Mig. i. 175. Th. ii. 124.

(4) Mig. i. 176.

Constituent Assembly, thousands of our fellow-citizens were slaughtered in the Champ-de-Mars, around the altar of France, where they were renewing the most sacred of oaths? If the people are violently alarmed, is it the part of their mandatories to refuse to hear them? Are not the grievances we have just heard, re-echoed from one end of France to the other? Is this the first time that in Paris the conduct of the King, and the perfidy of his councils, have excited the public indignation? You have heard the petitioners express themselves with candour, but with the firmness which becomes a free people (1).” It was thus that the Girondists encouraged the populace in their attempts to intimidate the government;—before a year had expired, on the same spot they fell a victim to the violence which they now excited.

Overawed by the danger of their situation, the Assembly received the petition with indulgence, and permitted the mob to defile before them. A motley assemblage, now swelled to 50,000 persons, men, women, and children, in the most squalid attire, immediately passed through the hall, uttering furious cries, and displaying seditious banners. They were headed by Santerre, and the Marquis de Saint-Hurugues, with a drawn sabre in his hand. Immense tablets were borne aloft, having inscribed on them the Rights of Man; others carried banners, bearing, as inscriptions, “The Constitution, or Death!”—“Long live the Sans-culottes!” At the end of one pike was placed a bleeding heart, with the inscription around it, “The Heart of the Aristocracy.” Multitudes of men and women, shaking alternately pikes and olive branches above their heads, danced round these frightful emblems, singing the revolutionary song of *Ca ira*. In the midst of these furies, dense columns of insurgents defiled, bearing the more formidable weapons of fusils, sabres, and daggers, raised aloft on poles. The loud applause of the galleries, the cries of the mob, the deathlike silence of the Assembly, who trembled at the sight of the auxiliaries they had invoked, formed a scene which exceeds all description. The passage of the procession lasted three hours. After leaving the Assembly, they proceeded in a tumultuous mass to the palace (2).

The palace invaded by the multitude. The outer gates were left open by order of the King. The multitude immediately broke into the gardens, ascended the staircase, and entered the royal apartments. Louis appeared before them with a few attendants. Those in front, overawed by the dignity of his presence, made an involuntary pause, but pressed on by the crowd behind, soon surrounded the monarch. With difficulty his attendants got him withdrawn into the embrasure of a window, while the crowd rolled on through the other rooms of the palace. Seated on a chair which was elevated on a table, and surrounded by a few faithful national guards, who kept off the most unruly of the populace, he preserved a serene and undaunted countenance in the midst of dangers, which every instant threatened his life. Never did he appear more truly great than on that trying occasion. To the reiterated demand that he should instantly ratify the decrees against the priests, and sanction the establishment of a camp near Paris, he constantly replied, “This is neither the time nor the way to obtain it of me.” A drunken workman handed him the red cap of liberty (3); with a mild aspect he put the revolutionary emblem on the head on which a diadem was wont to rest. Another presented him with a cup of water: though he had long suspected poison, he drank it off in the midst of applauses, involuntarily extorted from the multitude.

(1) Lac. i. 242.

(2) Lac. i. 243, Mig. i. 177. Th. ii. 133, 135.

(3) Lac. i. 244. Mig. i. 178. Th. ii. 138, 139, 140.

Informed of the danger of the King, a deputation of the Assembly, headed by Vergniaud and Isnard, repaired to the palace. With difficulty they penetrated through the crowds which filled its apartments, and found the King seated in the same place, unshaken in courage, but almost exhausted by fatigue. One of the national guard approached him to assure him of his devotion. "Feel," said he, placing his hand on his bosom, "whether this is the beating of a heart agitated by fear?" Vergniaud, however, was not without disquietude from the menaces which he had heard in the remoter parts of the crowd. At length he succeeded in obtaining a hearing, and persuaded the people to depart. He was seconded by Pétion, and the mob gradually withdrew. By eight o'clock in the evening they had all withdrawn, and silence and astonishment reigned in the palace (1).

During the terrors of this agitating day, the Queen and the Princesses displayed the most heroic presence of mind. As they were retiring before the furious multitude, the Princess Elizabeth was mistaken for the Queen, and loaded with maledictions. She forbade her attendants to explain the mistake, happy to draw upon herself the perils and opprobrium of her august relative. Santerre shortly after approached, and assured her she had nothing to fear; that the people were come to warn, but not to strike (2). He handed her a red cap, which she put on the head of the Dauphin. The Princess Royal, a few years older, was weeping at the side of the Queen; but the infant, with the innocence of childhood, smiled at the scene by which he was surrounded.

First appearance of  
Napoléon.

A young officer, with his college companion, was a witness from the gardens of the Tuileries of this disgraceful scene. He expressed great regret at the conduct of the populace, and the imbecility of the Ministry; but when the King appeared at the window with the cap of liberty on his head, he could no longer restrain his indignation. "The wretches!" he exclaimed; "they should cut down the first five hundred with grape-shot, and the remainder would soon take to flight." He lived to put his principles in practice on the same spot—his name will never be forgotten: it was NAPOLEON BONAPARTE (3).

Indignation  
of France at  
this event.

The events of the 20th June excited the utmost indignation throughout France. The violence of their proceedings, the violation of their Assembly, of the royal residence, the illegality of a petition, supported by a tumultuous and disorderly rabble, were made the object of warm reproaches to the popular party. The Duke de La Rochefoucault, who commanded at Rouen, offered the King an asylum in the midst of his army; La Fayette urged him to proceed to Compiègne, and throw himself into the arms of the constitutional forces; the national guard offered to form a corps to defend his person; but Louis declined all these offers. He hoped for deliverance from the allied powers, and was unwilling to compromise himself by openly joining the constitutional party. The Girondists never recovered the failure of this insurrection. They lost the support of the one party by having attempted, of the other by having failed in it (4).

A petition, signed by twenty thousand respectable persons in Paris, was soon after presented to the Assembly, praying them to punish the authors of the late disorders; but such was the terror of that body, that they were incapable of taking any decisive steps. The conduct of the King excited general admiration: The remarkable coolness in danger which he had evinced extorted the applause even of his enemies, and the unhappy irresolution of his

(1) Mig. i. 178. Lac. i. 244. Th. ii. 141, 142.

(2) Mig. i. 178. Lac. i. 244. Th. ii. 140, 141.

(3) Bour. i. 73.

(4) Lac. i. 246. Mig. i. 178. Th. ii. 144.



earlier years was forgotten in the intrepidity of his present demeanour. Had he possessed vigour enough to avail himself of the powerful reaction in his favour, which these events excited, he might still have arrested the Revolution; but his was the passive courage which could endure, not the active spirit fitted to prevent danger (1).

June 28,  
1792.  
La Fayette  
arrives at  
Paris,  
La Fayette made a last effort to raise from the dust the constitutional throne: Having provided for the command of the army, and obtained addresses from the soldiers against the recent excesses, he set out for Paris, and presented himself, on the 28th June, unexpectedly at the bar of the Assembly. He demanded, in the name of his troops and of himself, that the authors of the revolt should be punished; that vigorous measures should be taken to destroy the Jacobin sect. His speech was loudly applauded by the Royalists, and excited the utmost dismay in the revolutionary party. They dreaded the promptitude and vigour of their adversary in the Champ-de-Mars. A feeble majority was obtained by the constitutional party in the Assembly, upon a motion to enquire into and punish the authors of the late disorders. Encouraged by this success, slight as it was, the general next presented himself to the court. He was coolly received by the King, and with difficulty succeeded in obtaining a review of the national guard. The leaders of the Royalists anxiously enquired at the palace what course they should adopt in this emergency. Both the King and the Queen answered, that they could place no confidence in La Fayette (2). He next applied, with a few supporters, who were resolved to uphold the crown in spite of itself, to the national guard; but the influence of the general with that body was gone. He was received in silence by all the battalions who had so recently worshipped his footsteps, and retired to his hotel despairing of the constitutional cause. Determined, however, not to abandon his enterprise without a struggle, he appointed a rendezvous in the evening at his own house, of the most zealous of the troops, from whence his design was to march against the Jacobin Club, and close its sittings. Hardly thirty men appeared, and irresolution and uncertainty was painted in every countenance. In despair at the apathy of the public mind, La Fayette, after remaining a few days in Paris, set off alone, and returned to the army, after having incurred the disgrace, with one party, of endeavouring to control the Revolution; with the other, of having failed in the attempt. He was burnt in effigy by the Jacobins in the Palais-Royal, so recently the scene of his civic triumphs (3).

This was the last struggle of the Constitutionalists; thenceforward they never were heard of in the Revolution, except when their adherents were conducted to the scaffold. Their failure was the more remarkable, because not a year before they had acquired an absolute ascendant in Paris, and defeated an insurrection of the populace in a period of the highest public excitement. In such convulsions, more perhaps than in any other situation of life, it may truly be said, that there is a tide in the affairs of men. The moment of success, if not seized, is lost for ever; new passions succeed; new interests are awakened; and the leader of a nation at one period often finds himself, within a few months, as powerless as the humblest individual (4).

The Girondists and Republicans, emboldened by the failure of La Fayette's attempt, now openly aimed at the dethronement of the King. Vergniaud, in a powerful discourse, portrayed the dangers which threatened the country. He quoted the article of the constitution, which

(1) Dumont, 353. Jom. ii. 53. Th. ii. 148, 149.

(2) Madame Campan, ii. 224. Th. ii. 154, 155.

(3) Lac. 249, 250. Mig. i. 179, 180. Th. ii. 151, 155.

(4) Mig. i. 180.

declared, "that if the King put himself at the head of an armed force against the nation, or did not oppose a similar enterprise attempted in his name, he should be held to have abdicated the throne."—"Oh, King!" he continued, "who doubtless thought with the tyrant Lysander, that truth is not more imperishable than falsehood, and that we amuse the people with oaths as we amuse children with toys; who feigned only to regard the laws in order to preserve an authority, which might enable you to brave them; do you suppose that we are any longer to be deceived by your hypocritical protestations? Was it to defend us that you opposed to the enemy's soldiers, forces whose inferiority rendered their defeat inevitable? Was it to defend us that you suffered a general to escape who had violated the constitution? Did the law give you the choice of your ministers for our happiness or our misery? of your generals for our glory or our shame? the right of sanctioning the laws, the civil list, and so many prerogatives, to destroy the constitution of the empire? No! One whom the generosity of the French could not affect, whom the love of despotism alone could influence, has obviously no regard for the constitution which he has so basely violated, for the people whom he has wantonly betrayed."—"The danger which threatens us," said Brissot, "is the most extraordinary which has yet appeared in the world. Our country is in peril, not because it wants defenders, not because its soldiers are destitute of courage, not because its frontiers are unfortified, its resources defective; but because a hidden cause paralyses all its powers. Who is it that does so? A single man. He whom the constitution has declared its chief, and treachery has made its enemy. You are told to fear the King of Bohemia and Hungary: I tell you that the real strength of the kings is at the Tuileries, and that it is there you must strike to subdue them. You are told to strike the refractory priests wherever they are found in the kingdom: I tell you to strike at the court, and you will annihilate the whole priesthood at a single blow. You are told to strike the factious, the intriguers: I tell you, aim your blow at the royal cabinet, and there you will extinguish intrigue in the centre of its ramifications. This is the secret of our position; there is the source of our evils; there is the point where a remedy is to be applied (1)."

While the minds of men were wound up to the highest pitch by these inflammatory harangues, the committees, to whom it had been remitted to report on the state of the country, published the solemn declaration,—**"Citizens, the country is in danger!"** Minute guns announced to the inhabitants of the capital the solemn appeal, which called on every one to lay down his life on behalf of the state. The enthusiasm of the moment was such, that fifteen thousand volunteers enrolled themselves in June 8.

Paris in a single day. Immediately all the civil authorities declared their sittings permanent; all the citizens, not already in the national guard, were put in requisition; pikes distributed to all those not possessed of firelocks; battalions of volunteers formed in the public squares; and standards displayed in conspicuous situations, with the words, **"Citizens, the country is in danger!"** These measures, which the threatening aspect of public affairs rendered indispensable, excited the revolutionary ardour to the utmost degree. An universal frenzy seized the public mind. So far did this patriotic vehemence carry them, that many departments openly defied the authority of government, and, without any orders, sent their contingents to form the camp of twenty thousand men near Paris. This was the commencement of the revolt which overturned the throne (2).

(1) Mig. i. 182.

(2) Mig. i. 183. Th. ii, 159, 163, 184.

<sup>Fête of 14th July.</sup> The approach of a crisis became evident on the 14th July, when a fête was held in commemoration of the taking of the Bastille. Pé-tion was the object of the public idolatry. He had been suspended from his office of mayor by the Department of Paris, in consequence of his supineness during the tumult on the 20th June, but the decree was reversed by the National Assembly. His name was inscribed on a thousand banners; on all sides the cry was heard "Pétion, or death!" The King went in procession from the palace to the altar in the Champ-de-Mars; but how different was his reception from that which he had experienced two years before on the same occasion! Pensive and melancholy, he marched with the Queen and the Dauphin through a single file of soldiers, who could with difficulty keep back the intrusion, and were wholly unable to prevent the maledictions, of the mob. Innumerable voices reproached him with his perfidious flight; the intrepid aspect of the Swiss Guard alone protected him from actual violence (1). He returned to the palace in the deepest dejection, and was not again seen in public till he ascended the scaffold.

The declaration by the Assembly that the country was in danger, procured a prodigious accession of power to the revolutionary party. On the 14th July, when the fête of the confederation was held, the persons who had arrived in the capital, from the provinces, did not exceed two thousand, but their numbers daily and rapidly increased. The solemn announcement put all France in motion. Multitudes of ardent young men hourly arrived from the provinces, all filled with the most vehement revolutionary excitation, who added to the already appalling fermentation of the capital. The Assembly, with culpable weakness, gave them the exclusive use of its galleries, where they soon acquired the entire command of its deliberations. They were all paid thirty sous a-day from the public treasury, and formed into a club, which soon surpassed in democratic violence the far-famed meetings of the Jacobins. The determination to overturn the throne was openly announced by these ferocious bands; and some of the French guards were incorporated by the Assembly with their ranks, from whose discipline and experience they soon acquired the elements of military organization (2).

Meanwhile measures were openly taken, which were best calculated to ensure the success of the revolt. The attacks on La Fayette were multiplied; he was denounced at the clubs, and became the object of popular execration. The war party was every where predominant. The whole jealousy of the Assembly was directed against the court, from whom, aided by the allies, they expected a speedy punishment for their innumerable acts of treason. By their orders, such battalions of the national guard as were suspected of a leaning towards the court, especially the grenadiers of the quarter of St.-Thomas, were jealously watched; the club of the Feuillants was closed; the grenadiers, and chasseurs of the national guard, who constituted the strength of the burgher force, were disbanded, and the troops of the line and Swiss guard removed to a distance from Paris (3).

The chiefs of the revolt met at Charenton, but none could be brought to accept the perilous duties of leading the attack. Robespierre spoke with alarm of the dangers which attended it; Danton, Collot-d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, and the other leaders of the popular party, professed themselves willing to second, but not fitted to head the enterprise. At length Danton presented Westermann; a man of undaunted courage and savage character, who

(1) Mig. i. 183. Lac. i. 254. De Staël, ii. 54.

(2) Th. ii. 192, 193.

(3) Mig. i. 183. Lac. i. 255. Th. ii. 193.

subsequently signalized himself in the war of la Vendée, and ultimately perished on the scaffold (1).

The court, amidst the general dissolution of their authority, had no hope but on the approach of the allied armies. The Queen was possessed of their proposed line of march; she knew when they were expected at Verdun, and the intervening towns,—the unhappy princess expected to be delivered in a month. All the measures of the court were taken to gain time for their approach. In the mean while, the royal family laboured under such apprehensions of being poisoned, that they ate and drank nothing but what was secretly prepared by one of the ladies of the bedchamber, and privately brought by Madame Campan, after the viands prepared by the cook had been placed on the table. Great numbers of the Royalists, with faithful devotion, daily repaired to the Tuileries to offer their lives to their Sovereign, amidst the perils which were evidently approaching; but, though their motives command respect, the diversity of their counsels added to the natural irresolution of his character. Some were for transporting him to Compiègne, and thence, by the Forest of Ardennes, to the banks of the Rhine; others, amongst whom was La Fayette, besought him to seek an asylum with the armies; while Malesherbes strongly counselled his abdication, as the only chance of safety. In the midst of such distracting counsels, and in the presence of such evident dangers, nothing was done. A secret flight was resolved on one day, and promised every chance of success; but, after reflecting on it for the night, the King determined to abandon that project, lest it should be deemed equivalent to a declaration of civil war. Royalist committees were formed, and every effort was made to arrest the progress of the insurrection, but all in vain: the court found itself supported by a few thousand resolute gentlemen, who were willing to lay down their lives in its defence, but could not, amidst revolutionary millions acquire the organization requisite to ensure its safety (2).

Advance and proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick. The conspiracy, which was originally fixed for the 4th August, misgave more than once, from the people not being deemed by the leaders in a sufficient state of excitement to ensure the success of the enterprise. But this defect was soon removed, by the progress and injudicious conduct of the allied troops. The Duke of Brunswick broke up from Coblentz on the 25th of July, and advanced at the head of seventy thousand Prussians, and sixty-eight thousand Austrians and Hessians, into the French territory. His entry was preceded by a proclamation, in which he reproached "those who had usurped the reins of government in France with having troubled the social order, and overturned the legitimate government; with having committed daily outrages on the King and Queen; with having, in an arbitrary manner, invaded the rights of the German Princes in Alsace and Lorraine, and declared war unnecessarily against the King of Hungary and Bohemia. He proclaimed in consequence, "that the Allied Sovereigns had taken up arms to stop the anarchy which prevailed in France, to check the dangers which threatened the throne and the altar, to give liberty to the King, and restore him to the legitimate authority of which he had been deprived, but without any intention whatever of individual aggrandisement; that the national guards would be held responsible for the maintenance of order till the arrival of the allied forces, and that those who dared to resist must expect all the rigour of military execution. Finally, he warned the National Assembly, the municipality, and city of Paris, that if they did not forthwith liberate

(1) Lac. i. 261.

(2) Bert. de Moll. viii. 284, 290. Th. ii. 200  
213. Camp. ii. 125, 139, 230.

the King, and return to their allegiance, they should be held personally responsible, and answer with their heads for their disobedience; and that, if the palace were forced, or the slightest insult offered to the royal family, an exemplary and memorable punishment should be inflicted, by the total destruction of the city of Paris (1)."

Had this manifesto been couched in more moderate language, and followed up by a rapid and energetic military movement, it might have had the desired effect; the passion for power been supplanted in the excited multitude by that of fear; the insurrection crushed like the subsequent ones of Spain and Poland, before it had acquired the consistency of military power, and the throne of Louis, for a time at least, re-established. But coming, as it did, in a moment of extreme public excitement; and enforced, as it was, by the most feeble and inefficient military measures, it contributed in a signal manner to accelerate the march of the Revolution, and was the immediate cause of the downfall of the throne. The leaders of the Jacobins had no longer any reason to complain of the want of enthusiasm in the people. An unanimous spirit of resistance burst forth in every part of France; the military preparations were redoubled, the ardour of the multitude was raised to the highest pitch. The manifesto of the Allied Powers was regarded as unfolding the real designs of the court, and the emigrants. Revolt against the throne appeared the only mode of maintaining their liberties; the people of Paris had no choice between victory and death. It is painful to think that the King so soon became the victim, in a great measure, of the apprehension excited by the language of the Allies, which differed so widely from what he had so wisely recommended. Even in the midst of his apprehensions, however, he never lost his warm love to his people: "How soon," he often exclaimed, "would all these chagrins be forgotten, in the slightest return of their affection (2)!"

The leaders of the different parties strove to convert this effervescence into the means of advancing their separate ambitious designs. The Girondists were desirous of having the King dethroned by a decree of the Assembly, because, as they had acquired the majority in that body, that would have been equivalent to vesting supreme dominion in themselves; but this by no means answered the views of the popular demagogues, who were as jealous of the Assembly as of the crown, and aimed at overthrowing, at one blow, the legislature and the throne. Danton, Robespierre, Marat, Camille Desmoulins, Fabre d'Eglantine, and their associates, were the leaders of the popular insurrection, which was intended not only to destroy the King, but establish the multitude. The seeds of division, therefore, between the Girondists and the Jacobins, were sown from the moment that they combined together to overturn the monarchy; the first sought to establish the middling class and the Assembly on the ruins of the throne; the last to elevate the multitude by the destruction of both (3).

August 3.  
Prepara-  
tions for  
the revolt. The arrival of the federal troops from Marseilles, in the beginning of August, augmented the strength and confidence of the insurgents. On the 3d, the sections were extremely agitated, and that of Mauconseil declared itself in a state of insurrection. The dethronement of the King was discussed with vehemence in all the popular clubs; and Pétion, with a formidable deputation, appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and demanded it in the name of the municipality and the sections. That body re-

(1) Mig. i. 186.

(2) Mig. i. 186. Toul. ii. 220. Th. ii. 230.

(3) Mig. i. 187. Toul. ii. 21.

mitted the petition to a committee to report. On the 8th, a stormy discussion arose on the proposed accusation of La Fayette; but the Constitutionals threw it out by a majority of 406 to 224,—so strongly confirmed was the majority in the legislature, on the very eve of a convulsion destined to overthrow both them and the throne! The clubs and the populace were to the last degree irritated at the acquittal of their former idol; all those who had voted with the majority were insulted as they left the hall; and the streets resounded with cries against the Assembly, which had acquitted “the traitor La Fayette (1)!”

On the 9th, the effervescence was extreme; the Constitutionals complained of the insults to which they had been exposed on leaving the Hall on the preceding day, and insisted that the Marseillais troops should be sent to the camp at Soissons. While the discussion on the subject was going forward, it was announced to the Assembly that one of the sections had declared, that if the dethronement was not pronounced on that day, they would sound the tocsin, and beat the *générale*, at midnight, and march against the palace. Forty-seven out of the forty-eight sections of Paris had approved of this resolution. The Legislature required the authorities of the departments, and of the city of Paris, to maintain the public tranquillity; the first replied that they had every inclination, but did not possess the power to do so; Pétion answered in name of the latter, that as the sections had resumed their powers, his functions were reduced to mere persuasion. The Assembly separated without having done any thing to ward off the coming blow (2).

At length, at midnight, on the 9th August, a cannon was fired, the tocsin sounded, and the *générale* beat in every quarter of Paris; the insurgents immediately began to assemble in great strength at their different rallying points. The survivors of the bloody catastrophe which was about to commence, have portrayed in the strongest colours the horrors of that dreadful night, when the oldest monarchy in Europe began to fall. The incessant clang of the tocsin, the rolling of the drums, the rattling of artillery and ammunition-waggons along the streets, the cries of the insurgents, the march of columns, rung in their ears for long after, and haunted their minds, even in moments of festivity and rejoicing (3). The Club of the Jacobins, that of the Cordeliers, and the section of Quinze-Vingts, in the Faubourg St.-Antoine, were the three centres of the insurrection. The most formidable forces were assembled at the Club of the Cordeliers; the Marseillais troops were there, and the vigour of DANTON gave energy to all their proceedings: “It is time,” said he, “to appeal to the laws and legislators; the laws have made no provision for such offences, the legislators are the accomplices of the criminals. Already they have acquitted La Fayette; to absolve that traitor is to deliver us to him, to the enemies of France, to the sanguinary vengeance of the Allied Kings. This very night the perfidious Louis has chosen to deliver to carnage and conflagration the capital, which he is prepared to quit in the moment of its ruin. To arms! to arms! no other chance of escape is left to us.” The insurgents, and especially the Marseillais, impatiently called for the signal to march; and the cannon of all the sections began to roll towards the centre of the city (4).

The first step was to seize the Hôtel-de-Ville, dismiss the municipality, and appoint a new magistracy, chosen from the most violent among the people.

(1) Toul. i. 224. Mig. i. 187. Th. ii. 237.

(2) Toul. ii. 228. Mig. i. 188. Th. ii. 238, 239.

(3) De Staël, ii. 61. Th. ii. 214, 242.

(4) Lac. i. 264.

This was done almost without opposition, so completely were all the authorities paralysed by terror of the impending danger. Having gained this central point, their forces began to assemble in the Place de Grève, cannon arrived from all quarters, and the long columns of spearmen were seen to debouche from the crowded quarters of the city. Paris was in the most dreadful state of agitation; but, in the midst of the alarm, a great proportion of the national guard assembled, and repaired to the Tuileries, where a respectable force was now collected (1).

Preparations of the court. Aware of their danger, the court had for some days been making preparations to resist the threatened attack. Their principal reliance was on the Swiss guard, whose loyalty, always conspicuous, had been wrought up to the highest pitch by the misfortunes and liberality of the royal family. The Assembly had ordered them to be removed from Paris, but the ministers, on various pretexts, had contrived to delay the execution of the order, though they had not ventured to bring to the defence of the palace the half of the corps, which lay at Courbevoie. The number of the guard actually in attendance was about 800. The most faithful of the national guard rapidly arrived, and filled the court of the Tuileries; the grenadiers of the quarter of St.-Thomas had been at their post even before the signal of insurrection was given. Seven or eight hundred royalists, chiefly of noble families, filled the interior of the palace, determined to share the dangers of their sovereign; but their presence rather injured than promoted the preparations for defence. A motley group, without any regular uniform, variously armed with pistols, sabres, and firelocks, they were incapable of any useful organization; while their presence cooled the ardour of the national guard, by awakening their ill-extinguished jealousy of the aristocratical party. The heavy dragoons, on horseback, with several pieces of artillery, were stationed in the gardens and court, but in that formidable arm they were deplorably inferior to the forces of the insurgents. The forces on the royal side were numerous, but little reliance could be placed on a great proportion of them; and the gendarmerie à cheval, a most important force in civil conflicts, soon gave a fatal example of disaffection, by deserting in a body to the enemy (2). This powerful corps was chiefly composed of the former French guards, who had thus the infamy, twice in the same convulsions, of betraying at once their sovereign and their oaths.

At the first alarm the Assembly met, and Vergniaud took the chair. Their disposition to aid the throne was undoubted; but the insurrection of the people had deprived them of all their means of giving it effectual support. Their first measure had the most disastrous consequences. Péthion, Mayor of Paris, was at the palace, where he was giving an account of the state of the capital; they sent for him to the bar of the Assembly, and ordered him to repair to his post at the Hôtel-de-Ville. He was no sooner arrived there, than he suffered himself to be made prisoner by the insurgent force which had overturned the municipality; and without acquainting him with the change which had taken place, ordered Mandat, the commander of the national guards, to repair to the Place de Grève. In obedience to the civil authority, Mandat went there; he was immediately seized at the Hôtel-de-Ville, and accused of having ordered his troops to fire upon the people. Perceiving from the new faces around him that the magistracy was changed, he turned pale; he was instantly sent under a guard to the Abbey, but murdered by the populace on the very steps of the municipal palace (3). The new municipi-

(1) Lac. i. 264, 265. Toul. ii. 229. Mig. i. 189.

(3) Mig. i. 190.

(2) Lac. i. 265, 266. Th. ii. 243. Mig. i. 189.

pality forthwith gave the command of the national guard to Santerre, the leader of the insurgents (1).

The death of Mandat was an irreparable loss to the royal cause, as his influence was indispensable to persuade the national guard to fight, already much shaken by the appearance of so many royalists among the defenders of the King. At five in the morning, the King visited the interior parts of the palace, accompanied by the Queen, the Dauphin, and Madame Elizabeth. The troops in the inside were animated with the best spirit, and the hopes of the royal family began to revive; but they were cruelly undeceived on descending the staircase, and passing in review the forces in the Place Carrousel and the Garden. Some battalions, particularly those of the Filles Saint-Thomas and the Petits-Pères, received them with enthusiasm, but, in general, they were silent and the battalion of la Croix-Rouge, raised the cry of "Vive la Nation!" Two regiments of pikemen, in defiling before the King, openly shouted "Vive la Nation! vive Pétion! A bas le Veto, à bas le Traître!" Overcome by these ominous symptoms, the King returned, pale and depressed, to the palace. The Queen displayed the ancient spirit of her race. "Every thing which you hold most dear," said she, to the grenadiers of the national guard, "your homes, your wives, your children, depends on our existence. To-day, our cause is that of the people." These words, spoken with dignity, roused the enthusiasm of the troops to the highest degree; but they could only promise to sacrifice their lives in her defence; nothing announced the enthusiasm of victory. Though the air of the King was serene, despair was fixed in his heart. He had no apprehensions for himself, and had refused to put on the shirt of mail which the Queen had formed to avert the stroke of an assassin. "No," replied he, "in the day of battle the King should be clothed as the meanest of his followers." But he could not be prevailed upon to seize the decisive moment. Nothing is more certain, than that, if he had charged at the head of his followers, he would have dispersed the insurrection, and possibly, even at the eleventh hour, restored the throne (2).

While irresolution and despondency prevailed at the Tuileries, the energy of the insurgents was hourly increasing. Early in the morning they had forced the arsenal, and distributed arms among the multitude. A column of the Faubourg St.-Antoine, composed of fifteen thousand men, and that of the Faubourg St.-Marceau, five thousand strong, had marched towards the palace at six in the morning, and were every moment increasing on the road. A troop, placed by order of the directory of the department, on the Pont-Neuf, had been forced, and the communication between the opposite banks of the river was open. Soon after, the advanced guard of the insurrection, composed of the troops from Marseille and Brittany, had debouched by the rue St.-Honoré, and occupied the Place du Carrousel, with their cannon directed against the palace. Rœderer, in this emergency, petitioned the Assembly for authority to treat with the insurgents, but they paid no regard to his application. He next applied to the national guard, and read to them the articles of the constitution, which enjoined them in case of attack, to repel force by force; but a slender proportion of them only seemed disposed to support the throne, and the cannoneers, instead of an answer, unloaded their pieces. Finding the popular cause every where triumphant, he returned in dismay to the palace (3).

(1) Mig. i. 190. Toul. ii. 233. Th. ii. 249.

(2) Toul. ii. 236. Mig. i. 190. Lac. i. 267. Th. ii. 252, 253, 255.

(3) Mig. i. 192. Lac. i. 267. Th. ii. 253.



The King leaves the palace, and joins the Assembly. The King was there sitting in council with the Queen and his Ministers. Roederer immediately announced that the danger was extreme; that the insurgents would agree to no terms; that the national guard could not be relied on; and that the destruction of the royal family was inevitable if they did not take refuge in the bosom of the assembly. "I would rather," said the Queen, "be nailed to the walls of the palace than leave it!" and immediately addressing the King, and presenting to him a pistol, exclaimed, "Now, Sire, this is the moment to show yourself." The King remained silent; he had the resignation of a martyr, but not the spirit of a hero. "Are you prepared, Madame," said Roederer, "to take upon yourself the responsibility of the death of the King, of yourself, of your children, and of all who are here to defend you?" These words decided Louis; he rose up, and addressing himself to those around him, said, "Gentlemen, nothing remains to be done here." Accompanied by the Queen, the Dauphin, and the royal family, he descended the stair and crossed the garden protected by the Swiss guards, and the battalions of the Filles St.-Thomas and the Petits-Pères. These faithful troops had the utmost difficulty in getting them into the Assembly in the adjoining street, amidst the menaces and execrations of the multitude (1).

"Gentlemen," said the King, on entering the Assembly, "I am come here to save the nation from the commission of a great crime; I shall always consider myself, with my family, safe in your hands."—"Sire," replied the President Vergniaud, "you may rely on the firmness of the National Assembly; its members have sworn to die in defence of the rights of the people, and of the constituted authorities; it will remain firm at its post; we will die rather than abandon it." In truth, the Girondists, having gained from the insurrection their real object of humbling the King, were now sincere in their wish to repress the multitude—a vain attempt, which only showed their unfitness to guide during the stormy days of a revolution (2).

Desperate fight in the Place Carrousel. Meanwhile the new municipality, organized by Danton and Robespierre, was directing all the movements of the insurrection. A formidable force occupied the side of the Place Carrousel next the Louvre, and numerous pieces of artillery were pointed against the palace, whose defenders were severely weakened by the detachment of the Swiss guard and the royalist battalions who had accompanied the King. The gendarmes, posted in front of the palace, had shamefully quitted their post, crying "Vive la Nation!" the national guard was so divided as to be incapable of action; the cannoneers had openly joined the enemy; but, with heroic firmness, the Swiss guard remained unshaken in resolution amidst the defection of all around them. The assailants having endeavoured to penetrate into the interior of the palace, a struggle commenced, and the Swiss troops, firing from the windows, speedily drove back the foremost of their enemies; immediately after, descending the staircase, and ranging themselves in battle array in the court of the Carrousel, by a heavy and sustained fire, they completed their defeat. The insurgents, late so audacious, fled in confusion as far as the Pont-Neuf, and many never stopped till they had reached their homes in the faubourgs. Three hundred horse, in that critical moment, might have saved the monarchy. But the heroic defenders of the palace, few in number, and destitute of cavalry, did not venture to follow up their victory; the populace gradually regained their courage when they perceived they were not pursued, and a new attack, directed by Westermann, was prepared, under

(1) Mig. i. 192. Lac. i. 267, 268. Th. ii. 254. (2) Mig. i. 193. Lac. i. 269. Th. ii. 257.

cover of a numerous artillery. The Marseillais and Breton troops returned in greater force; the Swiss were mown down with grape-shot, and their undaunted ranks fell in the place where they stood (1), unconquered even in death. In its last extremity, it was neither in its titled nobility, nor its native armies, that the French throne found fidelity, but in the freeborn mountaineers of Lucerne, unstained by the vices of a corrupted age, and firm in the simplicity of rural life.

Massacre of  
the Swiss.

It was no longer a battle, but a massacre: the enraged multitude broke into the palace, and put to death every one found within it; the fugitives, pursued into the gardens of the Tuileries by the pikemen from the faubourgs, were unmercifully put to death under the trees, amidst the fountains, and at the feet of the statues. Some miserable wretches climbed up the marble monuments which adorn that splendid spot; the insurgents abstained from firing, lest they should injure the statuary, but pricked them with their bayonets, till they came down, and then murdered them at their feet; an instance of taste for art, mingled with revolutionary cruelty, perhaps unparalleled in the history of the world (2). During the whole evening and night, the few survivors of the Swiss guard were sought out with unpitied ferocity by the populace, and wherever they were found, immediately massacred; hardly any escaped, and those that did so, owed their lives almost uniformly to the fidelity of female attachment (3).

While these terrible scenes were going forward, the Assembly was in the most violent agitation. At the first discharge of musketry, the King declared that he had forbid the troops to fire, and signed an order to the Swiss guards to stop the combat, but the officer who bore it was massacred on the road. As the firing grew louder the consternation increased, and many deputies rose to escape; but others exclaimed, "No! this is our post." The people in the galleries drowned the speakers by their cries (4), and soon the loud shouts, "Victoire, victoire, les Suisses sont vaincus!" announced that the fate of the monarchy was decided.

The 10th August was the last occasion on which the means of saving France were placed in the hands of the King; but there can be little doubt that, had he possessed a firmer character, he might have accomplished the task. The great bulk of the nation was disgusted with the excesses of the Jacobins, and the outrage of the 20th June had excited an universal feeling of horror. If he had acted with vigour on that trying occasion, repelled force by force, and seized the first moments of victory to proclaim as enemies the Jacobins and Girondists who had a hundred times violated the constitution, dissolved the Assembly, closed the clubs, and arrested the leaders of the revolt, that day would have re-established the royal authority. But that conscientious prince never imagined that the salvation of his kingdom was indissolubly connected with his private safety; and he preferred exposing himself to certain destruction, to the risk of shedding blood in the attempt to avert it (5).

King de-  
throned.

In the first tumult of alarm, the Assembly published a proclamation, recommending moderation in the use of victory. A deputation from the municipality shortly after appeared at the bar, demanding that their powers should be confirmed, and insisting for the dethronement of the King, and the immediate convocation of a National Convention. Other

(1) Mig. i. 194. Lac. i. 271, 273. Toul. ii. 252, (4) Toul. ii. 254. Lac. i. 272. Mig. i. 195. Th. 253. Th. ii. 260, 261. ii. 263.

(2) Scott's Paris Revisited, 291.

(3) Lac. i. 272, 273. Toul. ii. 253.

(5) Dumont, 438.

August 10,  
1792.

deputations speedily followed, pressing the same demands, and enforcing them with the language of conquerors. Yielding to necessity, the Assembly, on the motion of Vergniaud, passed a decree, suspending the King, dismissing the ministers, and directing the immediate formation of a National Convention (1).

Reflections  
on the fall  
of the mo-  
narchy.

It is not at the commencement of revolutionary disturbances that the danger to social happiness is to be apprehended; but after the burst of popular fury is over, and when the successful party begin to suffer from the passions to which they owed their elevation. The 10th August did not come till three years *after* the 14th July. The reason is evident: In the first tumult of passion, and in the exultation of successful resistance, the people are in good-humour both with themselves and their leaders, and the new government is installed in its duties amidst the applause and hopes of their fellow-citizens. But, after this ebullition of triumphant feeling is over, come the sad and inevitable consequences of public convulsions,—disappointed hopes, exaggerated expectations, industry without employment, capital without investment. The public suffering which immediately follows the triumph of the populace, is invariably greater than that which stimulated their resistance. The ablest Republican writers confess, that one-half of the misery which desolated France during the Revolution, would have overwhelmed the monarchy (2). This suffering is inevitable; it is the necessary consequences of shaken credit, invaded property, and uncontrolled licentiousness; but coming, as it does, in the train of splendid hopes and excited imaginations, it occasions a discontent and acrimony in the lower orders, which can hardly fail of producing fresh convulsions. The people are never so ripe for a second revolution, as shortly after they have successfully achieved a first.

It is the middling ranks who organize the first resistance to government, because it is their influence only which can withstand the shock of established power. They accordingly are at the head of the first revolutionary movement. But the passions which have been awakened, the hopes that have been excited, the disorder which has been produced in their struggle, lay the foundation of a new and more terrible convulsion against the rule which they have established. Every species of authority appears odious to men who have tasted of the license and excitation of a revolution; the new government speedily becomes as unpopular as the one which has been overthrown; the ambition of the lower orders aims at establishing themselves in the situation in which a successful effort has placed the middling. A more terrible struggle awaits them than that which they have just concluded with arbitrary power; a struggle with superior numbers, stronger passions, more unbridled ambition; with those whom moneyed fear has deprived of employment, revolutionary innovation filled with hope, inexorable necessity impelled to exertion. In this contest, the chances are against the duration of the new institutions, unless the supporters can immediately command the aid of a numerous and disciplined body of men, proof alike to the intimidation of popular violence and the seduction of popular ambition.

Three great powers were brought into collision in the French Revolution; the People, the Aristocracy, the Allied Sovereigns. Each committed capital errors, productive of the most ruinous consequences; to their combined influence the unexampled horrors which followed are in a great measure to be ascribed.

(1) Mig. i. 195. Toul. ii. 256. Th. i. 263, 264.

(2) Mig. i. 127.

Errors of  
the popular  
party in  
France.

The first capital error of the People consisted in the confiscation of the property of the church. This flagrant act of injustice produced consequences the most disastrous, both upon the progress of the Revolution and the direction of the public mind. By alienating the affections, and inflaming the resentment of a numerous and powerful body, it produced divisions in the popular party, and superadded to the miseries of civil the rancour of religious strife. By arraying the cause of freedom against that of religion, it separated the two mighty powers which move mankind, and whose combined strength had in former ages established the fabric of civil liberty on the firm basis of private virtue. By exciting the force of public resentment against the church, it created a fatal schism between public activity and private virtue; sapped the foundations of domestic happiness, by introducing infidelity and doubt into private life, and overwhelmed the land with a flood of licentiousness, by removing the counterpoise created by religion to the force of the passions. Ages must elapse, and possibly a new revolution be undergone, before the license given to the passions can be checked, or the general dissolution of manners prevented (1). These consequences were as unnecessary as they are deplorable. There was no necessity for the spoliation, because, if the exigencies of the exchequer required an immediate supply, it should have been raised by a general contribution of all the classes of the state, not made good by the destruction of one of them. There was no moderation in the mode in which it was accomplished; because, even supposing the measure unavoidable, it should have been carried into effect without injuring the rights of the present incumbents (2). It ill became a people, insurgent against the oppression of their government, to commence their reign by an act of injustice greater than any of which they complained.

The next great fault of the Revolutionists consisted in the confiscation of the property of the noblesse, in pursuance of the cruel and unjust decrees of the Assembly, declaring their estates forfeited if they did not return to France before a certain day. Nothing could exceed the iniquity of this measure, because the mere fact of leaving the country was neither a moral nor a political offence; and even if it had, to confiscate their estates because they declined to return and place their necks under the guillotine, was a measure of severity greater than any of which the popular party complained, and which never disgraced the worst periods of feudal bondage. As this measure was thus to the last degree unjust, so it has produced effects from which France never can recover, and which, it is much to be feared, have rendered hopeless in that country the establishment of the regulated freedom of modern Europe. General liberty in all classes, it is now abundantly proved by experience, can be maintained only by the combined and counteracting influence of an aristocracy supporting, and a popular party restraining, the efforts of the executive. To suppose that it can exist in a country such as France became, after the destruction of the aristocracy, that is, when the great bulk of the landed property was divided among the peasantry, and no intermediate class existed, except in towns, between the throne and the cultivator, is out of the question. In such circumstances there is no alternative but American equality or Asiatic despotism: it is not difficult to perceive in which an old state, far advanced in the career of opulence, and surrounded by ambitious military monarchies, must finally terminate.

(1) Every third child in Paris is a bastard, and a large proportion of the poor die in hospitals.—*DURIN, Force commerciale*, i, 40, 99.

(2) *Madame de Staël, Rév. Franç.* ii. 94.

The event has abundantly proved the justice of these views. Previous to the Revolution, the provinces maintained a long and honourable struggle with the crown for the national liberties, and foremost in this contest were to be seen the most illustrious of the aristocracy of France. The parliaments, both of Paris and the provinces, derived their chief lustre from the consideration, character, and importance of their members, and it was by their influence and example that the whole nation was stimulated to the resistance which ultimately led to the Revolution. But since the destruction of the aristocracy, nothing of the kind has occurred. France has invariably submitted without a struggle to the ruling power in the capital, and whoever obtained the ascendancy in its councils, whether by the passions of the populace or the bayonets of the army, has ruled with despotic authority over the remainder of the kingdom. The bones and sinews of freedom were broken when the aristocracy was destroyed : Louis XV and his ill-fated successor found it impossible to control the independent spirit of the provincial parliaments, but Napoléon had no more obsequious instruments of his will than in the Conservative Senate. The passions of the multitude, strong and often irresistible in moments of effervescence, cannot be relied on as permanent supporters of the cause of freedom; it is an hereditary aristocracy, supported when necessary by their aid, which alone can be depended upon in such a contest, because they only possess lasting interests which are liable to be affected by the efforts of tyranny, and are influenced by motives not likely to disappear with the fleeting changes of popular opinion. Had the English Puritans destroyed the landed proprietors in 1642, a hundred and forty years of liberty and glory would never have followed the Revolution of 1688. It was not Napoléon who destroyed the elements of freedom in France : he found them extinguished to his hand—he only needed to seize the reins so strongly bitten on the nation by his revolutionary predecessors. There never was such a pioneer for tyranny as the National Assembly.

Errors of  
the nobles.

The fault of the aristocracy consisted in leaving their country in the period of its greatest agitation, and their sovereign in his extreme peril, to invoke the hazardous aid of foreign powers. Such a proceeding is always both criminal and dangerous; criminal, because it is a base desertion of the first social duties; dangerous, because success with such assistance produces perils as great as defeat. By striving to raise a crusade against French liberty, they put themselves in the predicament of having as much to fear from victory as defeat; the first endangered the national independence, the last threatened the power and possessions of their order. The French nobility never recovered the disgrace of having deserted to the ranks of the enemy, and appeared foremost in the battalions of those who, it was thought, came to subdue their country. The Jacobins have to thank their adversaries for having put into their hands the most powerful of all the engines by which they worked on the public mind; that of representing the aristocrats as the enemies of France, and the cause of democracy as the same as that of national independence. When we consider the powerful effects which a small body of disciplined men produced on the Champ-de-Mars under La Fayette, and on the Place du Carrousel on the 10th August, it is painful to reflect on the stand which might have been made against popular violence, by a small portion of that vast army of emigrants, who first occasioned the Revolution by their insolence, and then betrayed their sovereign by their desertion.

Errors of  
the Allies.

The error of the allied Sovereigns, and it was one fraught with the most disastrous consequences, consisted in attacking France at

the period of its highest excitation, and thereby converting revolutionary frenzy into patriotic resistance, without following it up with such vigour as to crush the spirit which was thus awakened. France was beginning to be divided by the progress of the Revolution, when foreign invasion united it. The cruel injustice of the Constituent Assembly to the priests had roused the terrible war in la Vendée; when the dread of foreign invasion for a time united the most discordant interests. The catastrophe of the 10th August was in some degree owing to the imprudent advance and ruinous retreat of the Prussian army; the friends of order at Paris were paralysed by the danger of the national independence; the supporters of the throne, ashamed of a cause which seemed leagued with the public enemies. Mr. Burke had prophesied that France would be divided into a number of federal republics; this perhaps would have happened, but for the foreign invasion which soon after took place. The unity of the republic, the triumphs of the consulate, the conquests of the empire, were accelerated by the ill-supported attacks of the Allies.

France, like every other revolutionary power, indeed would ultimately have been driven into a system of foreign aggression, in order to find employment for the energy which the public convulsions had developed, and food for the misery which they had created; but it is extremely doubtful whether from this source ever could have arisen the same union of feeling and military power which sprung up after the defeated invasion of the Allies in 1792. In combating a revolution, one of two things must be done; either it must be left to waste itself by its own divisions, which, if practicable, is the wiser course, or attacked with such vigour and such a force, as may speedily lead to its subjugation.

It is a total mistake to suppose, that the Revolution in France was unavoidable, or that the transition cannot be made from a state of despotism to one of comparative freedom, without going through so terrible a convulsion. It would be just as rational to suppose, that a river cannot descend from a higher to a lower level without being precipitated down a cataract, instead of flowing in a gentle descent. Changes as great as resulted in France from the Revolution, have been gradually induced in many other countries without producing such a catastrophe. The guilt of some of the parties during its progress, the weakness of others, are alone chargeable with its horrors. Its progress, like that of guilt in the individual, did not become finally fixed to evil, till irreparable injustice had been committed, and many opportunities of amendment thrown away. And if there is any one cause more than another, to which these disasters may justly be ascribed, it is the total want of religious feeling or control, in many of the ablest, and almost all the most influential, of its supporters. It was the absence of this check on the base and selfish feelings of our nature which precipitated the revolutionary party in the outset of their career into those cruel and unjust measures against the nobles and clergy, which excited the cupidity of all the middling orders in the state, by promising them the spoils of their superiors, and laid the foundations of a lasting and interminable feud between the higher and the lower ranks, by founding the interests of the latter upon the destruction of the former. The dreams of philanthropy, the dictates of enthusiasm, even the feelings of virtue, were found to be but a frail safeguard to public men in the calamitous scenes to which the progress of change speedily brought them. In this respect the English Revolution affords a memorable contrast to that of France; and in its comparatively bloodless career, and the abstinence of the victorious party from any of those unjust measures of confiscation which have proved so destructive in the neighbouring kingdom, may be traced the

salutary operation of that powerful restraint upon the base and selfish principles of our nature, which arises from the operation, even in its most extravagant form, of religious feeling. Mr. Hume has said, that fanaticism was the disgrace of the Great Rebellion, and that we shall look in vain among the popular leaders of England at that period for the generous sentiments which animated the patriots of antiquity; but, without disputing the absurdity of many of their tenets, and the ridiculous nature of much in their manners, it may safely be affirmed, that such fervour was the only effectual bridle which could be imposed on human depravity, when the ordinary restraints of law and order were at an end; and that but for that fanaticism, they would have been disgraced by the proscriptions of Marius, or the executions of Robespierre.

The elevation of public characters is not so much owing to their actual superiority to the rest of mankind, as to their falling in with the circumstances in which they are placed, and representing the spirit of the age in which they have arisen. The eloquence of Mirabeau would have failed in rousing the people on the 10th August; the energy of Danton would have brought him to the block in the commencement of the Revolution; the ambition of Napoléon would have been shattered against the democratic spirit of 1789. Those great men successively rose to eminence, because their temper of mind fell in with the current of public thought, while their talents enabled them to assume its direction. Mirabeau represented the Constituent Assembly: free in thought, bold in expression, undaunted in speculation, but tinged by the remains of monarchical attachment, and fearful of the excesses its hasty measures were so well calculated to produce. Vergniaud was the model of the ruling party under the Legislative Body: republican in wishes, philosophic in principle, humane in intention, but precipitate and reckless in conduct, blinded by ambition, infatuated by speculation, ignorant of the world and the mode of governing it, alike destitute of the firmness to command, the wickedness to ensure, or the vigour to seize success. Danton was the representative of the Jacobin faction: unbounded in ambition, unfettered by principle, undeterred by blood; who rose in eminence with the public danger, because his talents were fitted to direct, and his energies were never cramped by the fear of exciting popular excesses. It is such men, in every age, who have ultimately obtained the lead in public convulsions; like the vultures, which, invisible in ordinary times, are attracted, by an unerring instinct, to the scene of blood; and reap the last fruits of the discord and violence of others.

## CHAPTER VI.

FRANCE REPUBLIC—FROM THE DÉTHRONEMENT TO THE DEATH OF LOUIS.

## ARGUMENT.

Progressive Deterioration of the Ruling Power in France during the Revolution—Causes of this change—Fury of the Populace after the Storming of the Palace—Reappointment of the Girondist Ministry—Disposal of the King and Royal Family—They are transferred to the Temple—The Armies follow the Revolution at Paris—Fall and Flight of La Fayette—Great Influence of Danton, Marat, and Robespierre—Their Character—They insist for a Tribunal to try Offenders against the Revolution—First institution of the Revolutionary Tribunal—Consternation occasioned by the Advance of the Prussians—Plan for a Massacre in the Prisons—Barriers closed to prevent escape of Suspected Persons—Energetic Plans of Danton—Massacre in the Prisons—Of the Abbaye—Speech of Billaud-Varennes to the Murderers—Massacre in the Prison of Carmes—Death of the Princess Lamballe—Feeble Conduct of the Assembly—Internal Circular by the Municipality of Paris to the other Authorities in France—Their enormous and undiscovered Plunder—Termination of the Legislative Assembly—Elections for the Convention—Prodigious Influence of the Jacobin Clubs on them—Meeting of the Convention—It proclaims a Republic—Changes the Calendar—Strife of the Girondists and Jacobins—Their Character—Verghaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Barbaroux—Jacobins—Girondists form the right, Jacobins the left of the Assembly—Mutual Recriminations of the Girondists and Jacobins—State of Finances—Fresh Issue of Assignats—Completely Democratic Constitution, with Universal Suffrage established—Great Disorders and Massacres in France—Accusation of Marat by the Girondists—Louvet arraigns Robespierre—His Reply and Acquittal—Girondists in vain propose a Guard for the Convention—Jacobins spread Reports of the division of the Republic—Preparations for the Trial of Louis—Violent Agitation commenced by the Jacobins—Discovery of the Iron Closet in the Tuileries—Preliminary point—Could Louis be tried by the Convention?—Debate on the subject in the Convention—Majority determine he may be tried—Conduct of the Royal Family since their captivity—They are separated from each other—King brought to the bar of the Assembly—His return to the Temple—Generous devotion of Malesherbes and Tronchet—Splendid Peroration of Desèze—Debate on the Accusation—Louis is condemned, contrary to the opinions of almost all its Members—His Death resolved on—Dignified conduct of Louis—His last Interview with his Family—His last Communion—and Execution—Reflections on his Character, and on that event.

Progressive deterioration of the ruling powers of France.

From the first commencement of the contest, each successive class that had gained the ascendancy in France, had been more violent and more tyrannical than that which preceded it. The convocation of the States-General, and the oath in the Tennis Court, were the struggles of the nation against the privileged classes; the 14th July, and the capture of the Bastille, the insurrection of the middling class against the government; the 10th August, the revolt of the populace against the middling class and the constitutional throne. The leaders of the National Assembly were, in great part, actuated by the purest motives, and their measures chiefly blamable for the precipitance which sprung from inexperienced philanthropy: the measures of the Convention, tinged by the ferocity of popular ambition, and the increasing turbulence of excited talent: the rule of the Jacobins was signalized by the energy of unshackled guilt, and stained by the cruelty of emancipated slaves (1).

"Subjects," says Tacitus, "cannot, without the greatest danger, subvert the ruling power; for thence, in general, arises a necessity for crime: to avoid the consequences of a single rash act, men are obliged to plunge into the

(1) Mig. i. 196.



greatest excesses." The career of guilt is the same in nations as individuals; when once commenced, it cannot, without the utmost resolution, be abandoned. The ultimate acts of atrocity in which they both terminate, are, in general, the result of necessity : of the pressure arising from excited passion, of the terrors produced by anticipated punishment. The power of repentance exists only in the commencement. If we would avoid the last deeds of blood, we must shun the first seductive path.

There is nothing extraordinary, or contrary to what might have been anticipated, in this progress. The people are, in all ages, either swayed by their interests, or ruled by their passions : the force of intellect, all-powerful in the review of the past, is seldom felt in judging of the present. The cause is apparent, and has long ago been stated by Mr. Hume : in judging of the actions of others, we are influenced only by our reason or our feelings : in acting for ourselves, we are governed by our reason, our feelings, and our passions (1).

Cause of this change. It is a total mistake to suppose that the great body of mankind are capable of judging correctly on public affairs. No man, in any rank, ever found a tenth part of his acquaintance who were fitted for such a task. If the opinions of most men on the great questions which divide society are examined, they will be found to rest on the most flimsy foundations : early prejudice, personal animosity, private interest, constitute the secret springs from which the opinions flow which ultimately regulate their conduct. Truth, indeed, is, in the end, triumphant; but it becomes predominant only upon the decay of interests, the experience of suffering, or the extinction of passion. The fabric of society is in ordinary times, kept together, and moderation impressed upon the measures of government by the contrary nature of these interests, and the opposing tendency of these desires. Reason is sometimes heard, when the struggles of party, or the contentions of faction, have exhausted each other. The stability of free institutions arises from the counteracting nature of the forces which they constantly bring into action on each other.

These considerations furnish the eternal and unanswerable objection to democratical institutions. Wherever governments are directly exposed to their control, they are governed during periods of tranquillity by the cabals of interest, during moments of turbulence by the storms of passion. America, at present, exhibits an example of the former (2) : France, during the reign of Terror, an instance of the latter.

Those who refer to the original equality and common rights of mankind, would do well to show, that men are equal in abilities as well as in birth; that society could exist with the multitude really judging for themselves on public affairs; that the most complicated subject of human study—that in which the greatest range of information is involved, and the coolest judgment required, can be adequately mastered by those who are disqualified by nature from the power of thought, disabled by labour from acquiring knowledge, and exposed by situation to the seductions of interest; that the multitude, when exercising their rights, are not following despotic leaders of their own creation; and that a democracy is not, in Aristotle's words, "an aristocracy of orators, sometimes interrupted by the monarchy of a single orator."

When the different classes, during the convulsions of a revolution, are brought into collision, the virtuous and prudent have no sort of chance with the violent and ambitious, unless the whole virtuous members of the com-

(1) Hume, vi. 142.

(2) Hall's America, ii. 173.

munity are early roused to a sense of their danger, and manfully unite in resisting. In the later stages of such troubles, it is extremely difficult for them to recover their ascendancy; unless they are resolute and united, it is impossible. This is another consequence of the same principle. In the shock of a battle, gentleness and humanity are of little avail: audacity and courage are the decisive qualities. In the contests of faction, wisdom and moderation have as little influence. The virtuous are restrained by scruples, to which the unprincipled are strangers: difficulties which appear insurmountable to men accustomed to weigh the consequences of their actions, vanish before the recklessness of those who have nothing to lose. "It was early seen in the Revolution," says Louvet, "that the men with poniards, would sooner or later carry the day against the men with principles; and that the latter, upon the first reverse, must prepare for exile or death (1)."

The storming of the Tuileries, and the imprisonment of the King, had destroyed the monarchy; the Assembly had evinced its weakness by remaining a passive spectator of the contest; the real power of government had fallen into the hands of the municipality of Paris. The municipality governed Paris; Paris ruled the Assembly; the Assembly guided France. During the conflict, the leaders of the Jacobins avoided the scene of danger; Marat disappeared during the confusion, and left the whole to Westermann; Santerre was holding back with the forces of the faubourgs, till compelled by Westermann, with his sabre at his breast, to join the troops from Marseilles; Robespierre remained concealed, and only appeared twenty-four hours after at the Commune, when he gave himself the whole credit of the affair (2).

Fury of the  
populace in  
sacking the  
palace.

After the overthrow of the Swiss guards, the populace gave full reins to their vengeance in the sacking of the palace. Wearied of massacring or laying waste, they broke to pieces its magnificent furniture, and scattered its remains. Drunken savages broke into the most private apartments of the Queen, and there gave vent to indecent or obscene ribaldry. In an instant, all the drawers and archives were forced open, and the papers they contained torn in pieces, or scattered to the winds. To the horrors of pillage and murder, soon succeeded those of conflagration. Already the flames approached that august edifice, and the utmost efforts of the Assembly were required to save from destruction the venerated dome of the Tuileries. Nor were the remoter parts of the city exempt from danger. After the discharge of artillery, and the heavy volleys of the platoons had ceased, the dropping fire of the musketry told how active was the pursuit of the fugitives; while its receding sound and reverberation from all quarters, indicated how many parts of the city had become the scene of horrors (3).

Early on the 11th, an immense crowd assembled on the spot which was yet reeking with the blood of the Swiss who had perished on the preceding day. A strange mixture of feelings actuated the spectators; they succoured the wounded, and at the same time honours were decreed to the troops engaged on the side of the Republic, and hymns of liberty were sung by the multitude. The emblems of royalty, the statues of the kings, were, by orders of the Commune, entirely destroyed; those of bronze were carried to the foundry of cannon; even the name of Henry IV could not protect his image from destruction. The rise of democratic license in France was signalized by the destruction of the most venerable monuments of the monarchy; owing

(1) Louvet, 26. Rév. Mem. vol. xxvi.

(2) Barbaroux, 4, 43, 69. Th. iii. 4, 5. Mig. i.

(3) Th. iii. 9.

nothing to antiquity, they repudiated the honours she had transmitted to her children (1).

Reappointment of the Girondist ministry.

The first care of the Assembly was to provide in some degree for the administration of public affairs, after the overthrow of the throne. For this purpose, the Girondist ministers, Roland, Clavière, and Servan, were replaced in the offices of the Interior, the War Department, and the finances; while Danton, who had been the chief director of the revolt, was appointed to the important office of Minister of Public Justice. This audacious demagogue spoke at the head of a deputation from the municipality, in such language as sufficiently demonstrated where the real power of government now resided. "The people who have sent us to your bar," said he, "have charged us to declare to you, that they regard you as fully worthy of their confidence, but that they recognise no other judges of the extraordinary measures to which necessity has driven them, but the voice of the French people, your sovereign as well as ours, as expressed by the primary assemblies." Incapable of resistance, the Assembly had no alternative but to pass decrees, sanctioning all that had been done, and inviting the petitioners to make their concurrence known to the people (2).

Disposal of the King and royal family.

For fifteen hours that the sitting of the Assembly continued after the massacre of the Swiss, the King and royal family were shut up in the narrow seat which had first served them for an asylum. Exhausted by fatigue, and almost stifled by heat, the infant Dauphin at length fell into a profound sleep in his mother's arms; the Princess Royal and Madame Elizabeth, with their eyes streaming with tears, sat on each side of her. The King was tranquil during all the horrible confusion which prevailed, and listened attentively both to the speeches of the members of the legislature, and the arrogant petitioners who continually succeeded each other at their bar. At length, at one o'clock on the following morning, they were transferred for the night to the building of the Feuillants. When left alone, Louis prostrated himself in prayer. "Thy trials, O God! are dreadful; give us courage to bear them. We adore the hand which chastens, as that which has so often blessed us; have mercy on those who have died fighting in our defence!" On the following morning, they had the satisfaction of receiving the visits of many faithful Royalists, who, at their own imminent hazard, hastened to share the perils of the royal family. Among the rest was the faithful Hue, who had saved himself by leaping from a window and plunging into the Seine, during the hottest of the fire, where, when almost exhausted, he was picked up by a boatman. Already the august captives felt the pangs of indigence; all their dress and effects had been pillaged or destroyed; the Dauphin was indebted for a change of linen to the care of the lady of the English ambassador, and the Queen was obliged to borrow twenty-five louis from Madame Auguié, one of the ladies of the bedchamber; a fatal gift, which was afterwards made the ground of her trial and death, notwithstanding the claims of youth and beauty, and of the faithful discharge of duty. During the trying days which followed, the King displayed a firmness and serenity which could hardly have been anticipated from his previous character, and showed how little his indecision had proceeded from the apprehension of personal danger (3).

They are transferred to the Temple. August 13.

For three days the royal family slept at the Feuillants; but on the 13th, the Assembly, at the command of the Commune, directed that they should be conveyed to the Temple. Notwithstanding the

(1) Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 276, and Hist. ix. 259. Mig. i. 200.

(2) Th. iii. 6.

(3) Lac. ix. 250, 256.

excitement of the populace, many tears were shed as the melancholy procession passed through the streets. The carriage, conveying eleven persons, was stopped on the Place Vendôme, in order that they might see the fragments of the statue of Louis XIV; and at length the doors of the Temple closed upon its victims, and Louis commenced the spotless and immortal days of his life (1).

The armies obey the ruling powers. The victory over the throne on the 10th August, was immediately followed by the submission of all the departments in France to the ruling party. Opinions had been more divided on the revolt of July 14th; so powerfully, during the intervening period, had the revolutionary spirit gained the ascendancy, and so much more generally does fear operate than the love of freedom. At Rouen, a slight movement in favour of the constitutional monarchy took place, but being unsupported, it speedily ceased; and the emissaries of the all-powerful Commune of Paris succeeded in terrifying the inhabitants into submission (2).

Very different was the reception of the intelligence at the head-quarters of La Fayette's army, which at that juncture was at Sedan. The officers, the soldiers, appeared to share in the consternation of their chief, who resolved to make an effort in favour of the constitutional throne. The municipality of Sedan shared the sentiments of the army; and by command of La Fayette, they arrested and threw into prison the three commissioners dispatched by the National Assembly to appease the discontents of the army. The troops and the civil authorities renewed the oath of fidelity to the constitutional throne, and every thing announced a serious convulsion in the state (3).

Fall and flight of La Fayette. August 27. But the ruling power at Paris, in possession of the seat of government and the venerable name of the Assembly, was still predominant in the provinces; the period had not yet arrived when the soldiers, accustomed to look only to their leader, were prepared, at his command, to overthrow the authority of the legislature. The movement of La Fayette, and the troops under his immediate orders, was not generally seconded. A revolt in favour of the throne was looked upon with aversion, as likely to restore the ancient servitude of the nation; the tyranny of the mob, as yet unfelt, was much less the object of apprehension. Luckner, who commanded the army on the Moselle, attempted to second the measure of La Fayette; but Dumouriez, and the inferior generals, stimulated by personal ambition, resolved to side with the ruling party. The former, of a feeble and irresolute character, made his public recantation before the municipality of Metz; and La Fayette himself, finding dangers multiplying on all sides, and uncertain what course to adopt in the perilous situation of the royal family, fled from the army, accompanied by Bursau de Pucy, Latour Maubourg, and Lameth, intending to proceed to the United-States, where his first efforts in favour of freedom had been made; but he was arrested near the frontier by the Austrians, and conducted to the dungeons of Olmutz. He was offered his liberty on condition of making certain recantations: but he preferred remaining four years in a rigorous confinement, to receding in any particular from the principles which he had embraced. The Assembly declared him a traitor, and set a price on his head: and the first leader of the Revolution owed his life to imprisonment in an Austrian fortress (4).

(1) Lac. ix. 262. Mig. i. 196.

(2) Lac. i. 277. Mig. i. 197.

(3) Lac. i. 277.

(4) Lac. i. 278, 279. Mig. i. 199. Th. iii. 30, 34.

Mean-while, the principal powers of government fell into the hands of Danton, Marat, and Robespierre. The first of these had been chiefly instrumental in bringing about the insurrection of the 10th August. During the night preceding the attack, he had repeatedly visited the quarters of the revolutionary troops, and encouraged their ardour; as member of the municipality of Paris, he had been the chief director of their operations. He was shortly after, from his situation as minister of justice, invested with supreme authority in the capital, and was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the subsequent massacres in the prisons. Yet Danton was not a mere bloodthirsty tyrant. Bold, unprincipled, and daring, he held that the end in every case justified the means; that nothing was blamable provided it led to desirable results; that nothing was impossible to those who had the courage to attempt it. A gigantic stature, a commanding front, a voice of thunder, rendered him the fit leader of assassins more timid or less ferocious than himself. A starving advocate in 1789, he rose in audacity and eminence with the public disturbances; prodigal in expense, and drowned in debt, he had no chance, at any period, even of personal freedom, but in constantly advancing with the fortunes of the Revolution. Like Mirabeau, he was the slave of sensual passions; like him, he was the terrific leader, during his ascendancy, of the ruling class; but he shared the character, not of the patricians who commenced the Revolution, but of the plebeians who consummated its wickedness. Inexorable in general measures, he was indulgent, humane, and even generous to individuals; the author of the massacres of 2d September, he saved all those who fled to him, and spontaneously liberated his personal adversaries from prison. Individual elevation, and the safety of his party, were his ruling objects; a revolution appeared a game of hazard, where the stake was the life of the losing party: the strenuous supporter of exterminating cruelty after the 10th August, he was among the first to recommend a return to humanity, after the period of danger was past (1).

Character of Robespierre. Robespierre possessed a very different character: without the external energy of his rival, without his domineering character or undaunted courage, he was endowed with qualities which ultimately raised him to the head of affairs. Though not splendid, his talents were of the most powerful kind: ungainly in appearance, with a feeble voice and vulgar accent, he owed his elevation chiefly to the inflexible obstinacy with which he maintained his opinions at a time when the popular cause had lost many of its supporters. Under the mask of patriotism was concealed the incessant influence of vanity and selfishness; cautious in conduct, slow, but implacable in revenge, he avoided the perils which proved fatal to so many of his adversaries, and ultimately established himself on their ruin. Insatiable in his thirst for blood, he disdained the more vulgar passion for money; at a time when he disposed of the lives of every man in France, he resided in a small apartment, the only luxury of which consisted in images of his figure, and the number of mirrors which, in every direction, reflected its form. While the other leaders of the populace affected a squalid dress, and dirty linen, he alone appeared in elegant attire. An austere life, a deserved reputation for incorruptibility, a total disregard of human suffering, preserved his ascendancy with the fanatical supporters of liberty, even though he had little in common with them, and nothing grand or generous in his character. His terrible career is a proof how little in popular commotions even domineering vices are ultimately to be relied on; and how completely indomitable perse-

(1) *Mémoires*, i. 201, 202. *Roland*, ii. 14-17.

verance, and the incessant prosecution of selfish ambition, can supply the want of commanding qualities. The approach of death unveiled his real weakness (1); when success was hopeless, his firmness deserted him, and the assassin of thousands met his fate with less courage than the meanest of his victims.

Of Marat. Marat was the worst of the triumvirate. Nature had impressed the atrocity of his character on his countenance: hideous features, the expression of a demon, revolted all who approached him. For more than three years his writings had incessantly stimulated the people to cruelty; buried in obscurity, he revolved in his mind the means of augmenting the victims of the Revolution. In vain repeated accusations were directed against him; flying from one subterraneous abode to another, he still continued his infernal agitation of the public mind. His principles were, that there was no safety but in destroying the whole enemies of the Revolution; he was repeatedly heard to say, that there would be no security to the state till 280,000 heads had fallen. The Revolution produced many men who carried into execution more sanguinary measures; none who exercised so powerful an influence in recommending them. Death cut him short in the midst of his relentless career; the hand of female heroism prevented his falling a victim to the savage exasperation which he had so large a share in creating (2).

The influence of these leaders was speedily felt in the measures which were adopted by the municipality of Paris. Robespierre generally presented their petitions to the Assembly. "Blood," he exclaimed at the bar, "has not yet flowed; the people remain without vengeance. No sacrifice has yet been offered to the manes of those who died on the 10th August. And what have been the results of that immortal day? a tyrant has been suspended; why is he not dethroned and punished? You speak of bringing to judgment the conspirators of the 10th August; that is too slow a way of wreaking the national vengeance; the punishment of some is nothing, when others escape; they should all be punished, and by judges created specially for the occasion."—"The tranquillity of the people," said he, at another time, "depends on the punishment of the guilty; and what have you done to effect it? Your decree is manifestly insufficient. It is neither sufficiently extensive nor explicit; for it speaks only of the crimes of the 10th August; and the crimes against the Revolution are of much older date. Under that expression the traitor La Fayette could escape the punishment due to his guilt. The people, moreover, will not endure that this new tribunal should preserve the forms hitherto observed. The appeal from one jurisdiction to another occasions an intolerable delay; it is absolutely necessary that the tribunal should be composed of deputies chosen from the sections, and that it should have the power of pronouncing, without appeal, the last punishment of the law (3)."

17th Aug.  
Institution  
of the Re-  
volutionary  
Tribunal.

The Assembly in vain strove to resist these sanguinary demands. As they continued to temporize, the Commune sent them the most menacing messages, threatening to sound the tocsin at night, if the public vengeance was any longer delayed. "The people," it was said, "are tired of the delay of vengeance: beware of their taking the sword into their own hands. If within two hours the jury is not ready to convict, the most terrible calamities await Paris." Intimidated by these menaces, they appointed a tribunal for the trial of these offenders, the first model of the court afterwards so well known under the name of the Revolutionary Tribunal (4); but

(1) Roland, i. 298. Barbaroux, 63, 64. Mig. i. 217. Hist. de la Conv. i. 74.

(2) Barbaroux, 57. Garat, 174, 187. Lac. i. 281. Mig. i. 220.

(3) Th. iii. 26. Lac. i. 281.

(4) Mig. i. 201. Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 277. Th. iii. 27.

though it immediately condemned several persons, its proceedings appeared tardy to the Commune, who had resolved upon the most terrible projects.

Plan for a massacre in the prisons. The advance of the Prussians had occasioned the greatest agitation in the capital, and eminently favoured the savage designs of the demagogues. On the 20th August, Longwy was invested; on the 21st it capitulated; on the 30th the enemy appeared before Verdun, and the bombardment immediately commenced. Terror, the greatest instigator to cruelty, seized the minds of the populace; the executive council, composed of the ministers of state, met with the committee of general defence, to deliberate on the measures which should be pursued. Some proposed to await the enemy under the walls of Paris; others to retire to Saumur. "Are you not aware," said Danton, when his turn to speak came, "that France is governed by Paris, and that if you abandon the capital, you abandon yourselves and your country to the stranger? We must at all hazards maintain our position in this city. The project of fighting under its walls is equally inadmissible; the 10th August has divided the country into two parties, and the ruling force is too inconsiderable to give us any chance of success. My advice is, that to disconcert their measures, and arrest the enemy, we must strike terror into the royalists." The committee, who well understood the meaning of these ominous words, expressed their consternation: "Yes," said he, "I repeat it, we must strike terror." The committee declined to adopt the project; but Danton immediately laid it before the Commune, by whom it was readily embraced. He wished to impress the enemy with a sense of the energy of the Republicans, and to engage the multitude in such sanguinary measures, as, by rendering retreat impossible, gave them no chance of safety but in victory (1).

The Assembly, panic-struck, was incapable of arresting the measures which were in progress. The Girondists, who had so often ruled its decisions, when the object was to assail the court, found themselves weak and unsupported, when the end was to restrain the people. Its benches were deserted; the energy of victory, the throng consequent on success, had passed to the other side. Incessantly speaking of restraining the municipality, it never attempted any thing; the leaders of the Girondists were already threatened with proscription; Roland, the minister of the interior, Vergniaud, Guadet, and Brissot, were in hourly expectation of an accusation (2).

29th Aug. Barriers closed. On the 29th August the barriers were closed, and remained shut for forty-eight hours, so as to render all escape impossible; and on the 31st, and the 1st of September, domiciliary visits were made, by orders of the Commune, with a vast and appalling force; great numbers of all ranks were imprisoned, but the victims were chiefly selected from the noblesse, and the dissident clergy. To conceal the real designs of the Municipality, the citizens capable of bearing arms were at the same time assembled in the Champ-de-Mars, formed into regiments, and marched off for the frontier. The tocsin sounded, the *générale* beat, cannon were discharged; Tallien presented himself at the bar of the Assembly to give an account of the measures of the Commune. Vergniaud, and Henry Lanoue, had already denounced the sanguinary measures of that terrible body, but it was too late; the petitioners appeared with the tone and the arrogance of victors. "We have made domiciliary visits," he said. "Who ordered us to do so? Yourself. We have arrested the refractory priests; they are securely confined. In a few days the soil of freedom shall be delivered from their presence. If

(1) Mig. i. 202, 203. Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 284, 285.  
Th. iii. 44, 49.

(2) Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 285.

you strike us, you immolate at the same time the people who gained the victory of July 14th, who consolidated their power on August 10th, and who will maintain what they have gained." Mean-while, a tumultuous mob surrounded the Assembly; at the conclusion of every sentence, shouts of "Vive la Commune! Vivent nos bons Commissaires!" resounded through the hall; the mob burst into the interior, and defiled in a menacing manner before the tribune: subdued by so many dangers, it broke up without coming to any resolution, and the victory of the Municipality was complete (1).

Energetic  
plans of  
Danton. Encouraged by this success, the Commune proceeded, without further hesitation, in their sanguinary measures. Danton directed their operations, and framed the lists of proscription, at the hotel of the minister of justice. He soon after appeared at the bar of the Assembly, to give an account of the measures taken to ensure the public safety. "A part of the people," he said, "have already set out for the frontiers; another is engaged in digging our intrenchments; and the third, with pikes, will defend the interior of the city. But this is not enough; you must send commissaries and couriers to rouse all France to imitate the example of the capital; we must pass a decree, by which every citizen shall be obliged, under pain of death, to serve in person against the common enemy." At this instant the tocsin began to sound, the cannon were discharged, and he immediately added, "The cannon which you hear is not the cannon of alarm; it is the signal to advance against your enemies; to conquer them, to crush them! What is required? Boldness! boldness! boldness!" These words, pronounced with a voice of thunder, produced the most appalling impression; and a decree of the Commune was immediately proclaimed, announcing the urgent danger of the commonwealth, and commanding the whole citizens to repair armed to their several posts as soon as the cannon of alarm was heard (2).

The utmost terror was excited in every part of Paris at these preparations. An uncertain feeling of horror prevailed; every one apprehended that some dismal catastrophe was approaching, though none knew where or on whom the stroke was to fall. All the public authorities, the Assembly, the Municipality, the Sections, the Jacobins, had declared their sittings permanent. The whole city was in consternation, but the greatest alarms prevailed in the prisons. In the Temple, the royal family, who had so much reason to apprehend danger from the public convulsion, eagerly asked what had given rise to the unusual noise in the streets; while, at all the other prisons, the anxious looks of the jailers, and the unusual precaution of removing all the knives in use at dinner, told but too plainly that some bloody project was in contemplation (3).

Massacre in  
the prisons. At two in the morning, on the 2d September, the signal was given; the *générale* beat, the tocsin sounded, and the citizens of all ranks joined their respective banners. The victors and the vanquished, on the 10th August, appeared in the same ranks; so completely had the crisis of national danger, and the agitation of the moment, drowned even the fiercest domestic discord. A powerful auxiliary force was thus provided for the armies, which was instantly dispatched towards the frontiers, while the relentless Municipality was rapidly organizing the work of destruction in the capital, now stripped of its most energetic citizens (4).

The whole prisons of Paris had been filled with several thousand persons, arrested during the domiciliary visits of the preceding days. A band of three

(1) Th. iii. 54. Mig. i. 204. Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 284, 288.

(2) Mig. i. 204. Lac. i. 288, 289. Th. ii. 61.

(3) Th. iii. 61, 62.

(4) Mig. i. 204. Lac. i. 209. Th. iii. 62.



hundred assassins, directed and paid by the magistrates, assembled round the doors of the Hôtel-de-Ville. Ardent spirits, liberally furnished by the magistrates, augmented their natural ferocity. Money was supplied to those who appeared behind their comrades in determination, and the savage band marched through the streets singing Revolutionary songs. Robespierre, Billaud-Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois, alternately harangued the multitude: "Magnanimous people," exclaimed the last, "you march to glory; how unfortunate are we to be unable to follow your steps; how the audacity of our enemies will increase when they no longer behold the conquerors of the 10th August. Let us at least not become responsible for the murder of your wives and children, which the conspirators are preparing even in the prisons, where they are expecting their deliverers." Roused by these words, the mob became ready for every atrocity; and answered the discourse with repeated cries for the death of the imprisoned victims (1).

The prison of the Abbaye was the first to be assailed. The unhappy inmates of this gloomy abode had for some days been alarmed by the obscure hints of their jailers; at length, at three o'clock, on the morning of the 2d September, the increased clamour, and the shouts of the multitude, announced that their last hour was arrived (2).

Four-and-twenty priests, placed under arrest for refusing to take the new oaths, were in custody at the Hôtel-de-Ville. They were removed in six coaches to the prison of the Abbaye, amidst the yells and execrations of the mob; and no sooner had they arrived there, than they were surrounded by a furious multitude, headed by Maillard, armed with spears and sabres, dragged out of their vehicles into the inner court of the prison, and there pierced by a hundred weapons.

The cries of these victims, who were hewn to pieces by the multitude, first drew the eyes of the prisoners to the fate which awaited themselves; seized separately, and dragged before an inexorable tribunal, they were speedily turned out to the vengeance of the populace. Reding was one of the first to be selected; the pain of his wounds extorted cries even from that intrepid Swiss soldier as he was hurried along, and one of the assassins drew his sword across his throat, and he perished before reaching the judges. The forms of justice were prostituted to the most inhuman massacre; torn from their dungeons, the prisoners were hurried before a tribunal, where the president Maillard sat by torch-light with a drawn sabre before him, and his robes drenched with blood; officers with drawn swords, and shirts stained with gore, surrounded the chair. A few minutes, often a few seconds, disposed of the fate of each individual; dragged from the pretended judgment hall, they were turned out to the populace, who thronged round the doors armed with sabres, panting for slaughter, and with loud cries demanding a quicker supply of victims. No executioners were required; the people dispatched the condemned with their own hands, and sometimes enjoyed the savage pleasure of beholding them run a considerable distance before they expired. Immured in the upper chambers of the building, the other prisoners endured the agony of witnessing the prolonged sufferings of their comrades; a dreadful thirst added to their tortures, and the inhuman jailers refused even a draught of water to their earnest entreaties. Some had the presence of mind to observe in what attitude death soonest relieved its victims, and resolved, when their hour arrived, to keep their hands down, lest, by warding off the strokes, they should prolong their sufferings (3).

(1) *La. i. 290. Th. ii. 75. Mig. i. 204.*

(2) *Saint-Méard, 22.*

(3) *Saint-Méard, 22, 30, 40. Th. iii. 64, 65, 68. Peltier's Mémoires, xi. 26.*

The populace, however, in the court of the Abbaye, complained that the foremost only got a stroke at the prisoners, and that they were deprived of the pleasure of murdering the aristocrats. It was in consequence agreed, that those in advance should only strike with the backs of their sabres, and that the wretched victims should be made to run the gauntlet through a long avenue of murderers, each of whom should have the satisfaction of striking them before they expired. The women in the adjoining quarter of the city made a formal demand to the Commune for lights to see the massacres, and a lamp was in consequence placed near the spot where the victims issued, amidst the shouts of the spectators. Benches, under the charge of sentinels, were next arranged "*Pour les Messieurs*," and another "*Pour les Dames*," to witness the spectacle. As each successive prisoner was turned out of the gate, yells of joy rose from the multitude, and when he fell they danced like cannibals round his remains (1).

Speech of  
Billaud-Varennes to the  
murderers.

Billaud-Varennes soon after arrived, wearing his magisterial scarf. Mounted on a pile of dead, he harangued the people amidst this infernal scene:—"Citizens, you have exterminated some wretches; you have saved your country; the Municipality is at a loss how to discharge its debt of gratitude towards you. I am authorized to offer each of you twenty-four francs, which shall be instantly paid. [Loud applause.] Respectable citizens, continue your good work, and acquire new titles to the homage of your country! But let no unworthy action soil your hands: You dishonour this glorious day, if you engage in any meaner work: Abstain from pillage; the Municipality shall take care that your claims on them are discharged. Be noble, grand, and generous, worthy of the task you have undertaken: Let every thing on this great day be fitting the sovereignty of the people, who have committed their vengeance to your hands." The assassins were not slow in claiming their promised reward; stained with blood, bespattered with brains, with their swords and bayonets in their hands, they soon thronged the doors of the committee of the Municipality, who were at a loss for funds to discharge their claims. "Do you think I have only earned twenty-four francs?" said a young baker, armed with a massy weapon; "*I have slain forty with my own hands*." At midnight the mob returned, threatening instant death to the whole committee if they were not forthwith paid; with the sabre at his throat, a member of the Municipality advanced the half of the sum required, and the remainder was paid by Roland, the minister of the interior. The names of the assassins, and the sum they received, are still to be seen written with blood, in the registers of the section of the Jardin des Plantes, of the Municipality, and of the section of Unity (3).

The dignity of virtue, the charms of beauty, were alike lost upon the multitude. Among the rest, they seized on the humane and enlightened M. Sicard, teacher of the deaf and dumb, the tried friend of the poorer classes. He would have been instantly murdered, though his character was known, had not a courageous watchmaker, of the name of Monnot, rushed between, and stayed the lance, already raised to be plunged in his bosom. In the midst of the massacres, Mademoiselle de Sombreuil, eighteen years of age, threw herself on her father's neck, who was beset by the assassins, and declared they should not strike him but through her body. In amazement at her courage, the mob paused, and one of the number presented her with a cup filled with blood, exclaiming, "Drink! it is the blood of the aristocrats!"

(1) Abbé Sicard, 112, 116, 134. Rév. Mém. xlv.  
(2) Rév. Mémoires, xlv. 338, 339. Abbé Sicard,  
134, 135. Th. iii. 74, 75.

(3) Besides these sums, there is inscribed on the  
books of the Municipality the advance of 1463 fr.  
on September 4, to the assassins.—TIZARD, iii. 75.

promising, if she drank it off, to spare his life. She did so, and he was saved. Mademoiselle Cazotte, of still younger years, sought out her aged parent in prison during the tumult; when the guards came to drag him before the tribunal, she clung so firmly to his neck, that it was found impossible to separate them; and she succeeded in softening the murderers; but he perished a few days afterwards with the courage of a martyr, and his heroic daughter only learned his fate upon being subsequently liberated from confinement (1).

Similar tragedies took place at the same time in all the other jails of Paris, and in the religious houses, which were filled with victims. In the prison of the Carmes, above two hundred of the clergy were assembled; in the midst of them was the Archbishop of Arles, venerable for his years and his virtues, and several other prelates. Arranged round the altar, they heard the cries of the assassins, who clamoured at the gates; a few, yielding to the dictates of terror, had escaped, and were beyond the reach of danger, when, struck with shame at deserting their brethren in such an extremity, they returned, and shared their fate. Awed by the sublimity of the scene, the wretches hastened the work of destruction, lest the hearts of the spectators should be softened ere the massacre began; the Archbishop of Arles repeated the prayer for those in the agonies of death, and they expired, imploring forgiveness for their murderers. Many were offered their life on condition of taking the Revolutionary oaths; all refused, and died in the faith of their fathers. Among the slain were several curates, who had been eminent for their charity in the dreadful famine of 1789; they received death from the hands of those whom they had saved from its horrors (2).

The fate of the Princess Lamballe was particularly deplorable. Tenderly attached to the Queen, she at first, at her own desire, shared her captivity, but was afterwards, by orders of the Municipality, separately confined in the *Petite Force*. When the assassins arrived at her cell, she was offered her life if she would swear hatred to the King and Queen: she refused, and was instantly struck down. One of her domestics, whom she had loaded with benefits, gave the first blow. Her graceful figure was instantly torn in pieces, the fragments put on the end of pikes, and paraded through different parts of the city. The head, raised on a lance, was first carried to the palace of the Duke of Orléans, who rose from dinner, and smiled at the ghastly spectacle; it was next conveyed to the Temple, and paraded before the windows of Louis XVI. Ignorant of what had passed, and attracted by the noise, the King, at the desire of one of the commissioners of the Municipality, proceeded to the window; and, by the beautiful hair, recognised the bloody remains of his once lovely friend (3); another commissioner, of more humane feelings, tried to prevent him from beholding it. Afterwards, the King was asked if he remembered the name of the soldier who had showed such barbarity: "No," he replied; "but perfectly the name of him who showed sensibility (4)."

It is a singular circumstance, worthy of being recorded, as characteristic

(1) *Rév. Mémoires*, xlv. 76, 77. Sicard, 105. Th. iii. 71.

(2) *Lac. Pr. Hist.* i. 290, 291. Th. iii. 64, 65, 74, 75.

(3) *Lac. Pr. Hist.* i. 393. *Rév. Mémoires*, xlv. 71. Th. iii. 8.

(4) It is sometimes not uninteresting to follow the career of the wretches who perpetrate such crimes to their latter end. "In a remote situation," says the Duchess of Abrantes, "on the sea-coast,

lived a middle-aged man, in a solitary cottage, unattended by any human being. The police had strict orders from the First Consul to watch him with peculiar care. He died of suffocation, produced by an accident which had befallen him when eating, uttering the most horrid blasphemies, and in the midst of frightful tortures. He had been the principal actor in the murder of the Princess Lamballe."—*D'ABRANTES*, iii. 264.

of the almost inconceivable state of the human mind during such convulsions, that many of the assassins who put the prisoners to death, showed themselves, on some occasions, feelingly alive to the warmest sentiments of humanity. M. Journiac was fortunate enough, by a combination of presence of mind and good fortune, to obtain an acquittal from the terrible tribunal; two individuals, strangers to him, pressed his foot to mark when he should speak, and when acquitted, bore him safe under the arch of spears and sabres through which he had to pass. He offered them money when they had arrived at a place of safety; they refused, and, after embracing him, returned to the work of destruction. Another prisoner, saved in a similar manner, was conducted home with the same solicitude; the murderers, still reeking with the carnage they had committed, insisted on being spectators of the meeting of him and his family; they wept at the scene, and immediately went back with renewed alacrity to the scene of death. It would seem as if, in that convulsive state, all strong emotions rapidly succeed each other in the human breast; and the mind, wrought up as by the interest of a tragedy, is prepared alike for the most savage deeds of cruelty, or the tenderest emotions of pity (1).

Above five thousand persons perished in the different prisons of Paris during these massacres, which continued, with no interruption, from the 2d to the 6th September. When the other captives were all destroyed, the assassins, insatiable in their thirst for blood, besieged the Bicêtre, containing several thousand prisoners confined for ordinary offences, having no connexion with the state. They defended themselves with such resolution, that it became necessary to employ cannon for their destruction. But the multitude were resolutely bent on blood, and continued the contest, by unceasingly bringing up fresh forces, till the felons were overpowered, and all put to death. At length the murder ceased, from the complete exhaustion of its victims. Their remains were thrown into trenches, previously prepared by the Municipality for their reception; they were subsequently conveyed to the catacombs, where they were built up, and still remain the monument of crimes unfit to be thought of, even in the abodes of death, which France would willingly bury in oblivion (2).

During the crusade against the Albigeois, in the south of France, four hundred men and women were publicly burnt at Carcassonne, to "the great joy of the crusading warriors (3)." When the Athenian democracy extinguished the revolt in the island of Mytelene, they passed a decree, ordering the whole vanquished people, with their offspring (4), to be put to death. When the Irish soldiers in Montrose's army were made prisoners, after the battle of Philiphaugh, they were thrown, with their wives and children, from the bridge of Linlithgow, in Scotland; and the Patriot bands stood on the banks of the river with uplifted halberds, and massacred such of the helpless innocents as were thrown drowned upon the shore (5). Cruelty is not the growth of any particular country; it is not found in a greater degree in France than it would be in any other state similarly situated. It is the unchaining the passions of the multitude which in all ages produces this effect.

Feeble conduct of the Assembly. During these terrific scenes, the National Assembly, how anxious soever to arrest the disorders, could do nothing; the Ministry were equally impotent; the terrible Municipality ruled triumphant. At the

(1) Th. iii. 73. 74. Journiac St.-Méard, *Rév. Mémoires*, xvi. 349.

(2) Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 295. Th. iii. 83. Scott, ii. 47.

(3) Sismondi, vi. 307.

(4) Thucydides, i. 250, 256.

(5) Chambers' *Rebellions of Scotland*, iii. 37.

worst period of the massacres, the legislature was engaged in discussing a decree for the coining of money. When the slaughter of the priests at the prison of Carmes could no longer be concealed, they sent a deputation to endeavour to save the victims; but they only succeeded in rescuing one. On the following day, the Commissioners of the Magistracy appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and assured the deputies that Paris was in the most complete tranquillity, though the murders continued for four days afterwards. The national guard, divided in opinion hesitated to act; and Santerre, their new commander, refused to call them out. Roland alone had the courage in the Assembly to exert his talents in the cause of humanity (1). A few days afterwards the eloquence of Vergniaud roused the legislature from their stupor; and he had the resolution to propose, and the influence to carry, a decree, rendering the members of the Municipality responsible, with their heads, for the safety of their prisoners.

The small number of those who perpetrated these murders in the French capital under the eyes of the legislature, is one of the most instructive facts in the history of revolutions. Marat had long before said, that with two hundred assassins at a louis a-day, he would govern France, and cause three hundred thousand heads to fall; and the events of the 2d September seemed to justify the opinion. The number of those actually engaged in the massacre did not exceed three hundred; and twice as many more witnessed and encouraged their proceedings; yet this handful of men governed Paris and France, with a despotism which three hundred thousand armed warriors afterwards strove in vain to effect. The immense majority of the well-disposed citizens, divided in opinion, irresolute in conduct, and dispersed in different quarters, were incapable of arresting a band of assassins engaged in the most atrocious cruelties of which modern Europe has yet afforded an example;—an important warning to the strenuous and the good in every succeeding age, to combine for defence the moment that the aspiring and the desperate have begun to agitate the public mind; and never to trust that mere smallness of numbers can be relied on for preventing reckless ambition from destroying irresolute virtue (2).

It is not less worthy of observation, that these atrocious massacres took place in the heart of a city where above fifty thousand men were enrolled in the National Guard, and had arms in their hands; a force specifically destined to prevent insurrectionary movements, and support, under all changes, the majesty of the law. They were so divided in opinion, and the Revolutionists composed so large a part of their number, that nothing whatever was done by them, either on the 10th August, when the King was dethroned, or the 2d September, when the prisoners were massacred. This puts in a forcible point of view the weakness of such a body, which, being composed of citizens, is distracted by their feelings and actuated by their passions. In ordinary times, it may exhibit an imposing array, and be adequate to the repression of the smaller disorders; but it is paralysed by the events which throw society into convulsions, and generally fails at the decisive moment when its aid is most required.

levation of  
the Com-  
mune of  
Paris to  
other mas-  
sacres in  
France The Municipality of France wrote an infernal circular to the other cities of France, inviting them to imitate the massacres of the capital; but none obeyed the summons. The prisoners of Orléans had been dispatched to Paris; the emissaries of the Convention met them at Versailles, where they were all murdered, with the exception

(1) Lac. i. 295, 296. Hist. de France, ix. 369.  
Mig. i. 205. Th. iii. 76, 77, 79.

(2) Barbar. 57. Louvet, Rév. Mém. xlvii. 73.

of three, left for dead amongst the slain, and saved during the night by the humanity of some women. The virtuous and enlightened La Rochefoucault was arrested in his carriage, and massacred on the spot, in the arms of his wife and mother (1).

Enormous plunder by the Municipality of Paris. The plunder arising from the property of so many victims, procured immense wealth to the Municipality of Paris. Not only was the plate of the churches, and all the *moyables* of the emigrants, seized by their orders, but the whole effects of the victims massacred in the prisons, were, by them, put under sequestration, and disposed in the vast warehouses belonging to the Committee of Surveillance.

Neither the Assembly, nor the Convention, nor any other authority, ever could obtain from them either an account of the amount of this plunder, or how it was disposed of. The magistrates went a step further, and, of their own authority, sold the furniture of all the great hotels, on which the national seal had been put, in consequence of the emigration of their proprietors. The minister of the interior was unable to prevent those scandalous abuses : all the inferior agents of authority were in the interest of the Municipality ; and the National Guards, remodelled under the title of armed sections, and composed of the most worthless classes, were in a state of complete disorganization. One night the jewel-office in the Tuileries was pillaged, and all the splendid ornaments of the crown disappeared for ever. The seals affixed on the locks were removed, but no marks of violence appeared on them ; which clearly showed the abstraction was done by order of the authorities, and not by popular violence. One of the finest jewels afterwards appeared in the hands of Sergeant, one of the committee who signed the circular, calling upon the rest of France to imitate the massacres of the prisons in Paris. Such were the first effects of the popular election of a magistracy in the French capital (2).

Termination of the Legislative Assembly.

It was in the midst of these horrors that the Legislative Assembly drew to its termination. Its history is full of interest to those who study the workings of the human mind in periods of national convulsion. Its opening was preceded by a deceitful calm : the ambition of party, the fury of passion, seemed for a time to be stilled, and the monarch, hailed by the acclamations of the multitude, tasted for a few days the sweets of popular administration. The Constituent Assembly had declared the Revolution finished : the King had accepted the Constitution : the days of anarchy were supposed to be past. But those who "disturb the peace of all the world, can seldom rule it when 'tis wildest." It terminated in days of bloodshed and carnage ; with an imprisoned King, an absent nobility, an insurgent people ; preceded by the murder of the royalist, and with the axe suspended over the head of the patriotic class. The destruction which its measures brought upon the higher ranks, was speedily, by its successor, inflicted upon its own leaders. Such is the inevitable march of revolutions,

(1) *Lac.* i. 296, 298. *Th.* iii. 127.

The circular sent on this occasion by the Municipality of Paris to the other cities of France, is one of the most curious historical monuments of the Revolution. It concluded with these words : — "Being informed that hordes of barbarians were advancing against it, the Municipality of Paris lost no time in informing its brethren in all the other departments that a part of the conspirators confined in the prisons has been put to death by the people ; an act of justice which appeared indispensable, to retain in due subjection the legions of traitors within its walls, at the moment when the principal

forces of the city were about to march against the enemy. Without doubt, the nation at large, after the long series of treasons, which have brought it to the edge of the abyss, will adopt the same means at once so useful and so necessary ; and all the French will be able to say, like the people of Paris — We march against the enemy, and we leave none behind us to murder our wives and children." (Signed) "Duplain, Panis, Sergeant, Leuflant, Marat, Lefort, Jourdeuil, Administrators of the Committee of Surveillance, established at the Mayor's." — See *Talvas*, iii. 85, 86.

(2) *Th.* iii. 129, 131.

when the passions of the multitude are brought into collision with the unsupported benevolence of the philanthropic, and vigour and unanimity are not displayed by the friends of order and the holders of property; when reason and justice are appealed to on one side, and selfish ambition arrayed on the other. With less discussion on abstract rights, and more attention to present dangers, with less speculation, and more action, it might have arrested the progress of the Revolution: a vigorous prosecution of the victory in the Champ-de-Mars, a charge of 500 horse in the place of the Carrousel, on August 10th, would have prevented the overthrow of the throne, and extinguished the reign of Robespierre (1).

National Convention. The NATIONAL CONVENTION began under darker auspices. The 10th August had given the ascendant of victory to the democratical class; the great and inert mass of the people were disposed, as in all commotions, to range themselves on the victorious side. The sections of Paris, under the influence of Robespierre and Marat, returned the most revolutionary deputies; those of most other towns followed their example (2).

The Jacobins, with their affiliated clubs, on this occasion, exercised an overwhelming influence over all France. The parent Club at Paris had, with this view, printed and circulated in every department, lists of all the votes passed during the Session, to instruct the electors. All the deputies who had voted against the desires of the popular party, and especially all such as had acquitted La Fayette, were particularly pointed out for rejection. At Paris, the violent leaders of the Municipality who had organized the revolt of August 10th, exercised an irresistible sway over the citizens. Robespierre and Danton were the first named, amidst unanimous shouts of applause; after these, Camille Desmoulins, Fabre d'Eglantine, David the celebrated painter, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, Legendre, Panis, Sergent, almost all implicated in the massacres in the prisons, were also chosen. To these was added the Duke of Orléans, who had abdicated his titles, and was called Philippe-Égalité (3).

20th Sept. 1792. The first measure of the Convention was to abolish the monarchy, and proclaim a REPUBLIC. The calendar was changed: it was no longer the fourth year of liberty, but the first year of the French Republic. But no sooner were these great measures adopted than the fury of party broke out with redoubled violence: the contending factions seemed each desirous of placing itself at the head of the popular insurrection, recently become the ruling power. These two parties were the Girondists and the Jacobins. Their strife soon assumed an envenomed character; their principles were utterly incompatible: life, or death, hung on the issue of the struggle (4).

Character of the Girondists. The Girondists were the philosophers of the Revolution. Their ideas were often grand and generous, drawn from the heroes of Greece and Rome, or the more enlarged philanthropy of modern times; their language ever indulgent and seducing to the people; their principles those which gave its early popularity, and its immense celebrity, to the Revolution. But they judged of mankind by a false standard: their ruinous error consisted in supposing that the multitude could be regulated by the motives which influenced the austere patriots, whom they numbered among their own body. An abstract sense of justice, a passion for general equality, a repugnance for violent governments, distinguished their speeches; but yet from their innovations has sprung the most oppressive tyranny of modern

(1) Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 108, and Hist. France, ix.

149, 230.

(2) Lac. i. 299.

(3) Th. iii. 131, 133.

(4) Mig. i. 212. Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 5. Th. iii. 150.

times, and they were at last found joining in many measures of the most flagrant iniquity. The dreadful war which ravaged Europe for twenty years was provoked by their declamations; the death of the King, the overthrow of the throne, the Reign of Terror, flowed from the principles which they promulgated. It is no apology for such conduct, to allege that they were sincere in their desire for a republic, and the happiness of France: the common proverb, that "Hell is paved with good intentions," shows how generally perilous conduct, even when flowing from pure motives, is found to lead to the most disastrous consequences. They were too often, in their political career, reckless and inconsiderate; and thence their eloquence and genius only rendered them the more dangerous, from the multitudes who were influenced by such alluring expressions. Powerful in raising the tempest, they were feeble and irresolute in allaying it; invincible in suffering, heroic in death, they were destitute of the energy and practical experience requisite to avert disaster. The democrats supported them as long as they urged forward the Revolution, and became their bitterest enemies as soon as they strove to allay its fury. They were constantly misled, by expecting that intelligence was to be found among the lower orders; that reason and justice would prevail with the multitude; and as constantly disappointed by experiencing the invariable ascendant of passion or interest among their popular supporters;—the usual error of elevated and generous minds, and which so frequently unfits them for the actual administration of affairs. Their tenets would have led them to support the constitutional throne, but they were unable to stem the torrent of democratical fury which they themselves had excited, and compelled, to avert still greater disasters, to concur in many cruel measures, alike contrary to their wishes and their principles. The leaders of this party were Vergniaud, Brissot, and Roland; men of powerful eloquence, generous philanthropy, and Roman firmness; who knew how to die, but not to live; who perished, because they wanted the audacity and wickedness requisite for success in a Revolution (1).

The radical and inherent vice of this party was their irreligion; and the dreadful misfortunes in which they involved their country, proves how inadequate the most splendid talents are to the management of human affairs, or the right discharge of social duty, without that overruling principle. With all their love of justice, they declared Louis guilty; with all their humanity, they voted for his death. The peasants of la Vendée, who trusted only to the rule of duty prescribed in their religion, were never betrayed in the same manner into acts for which no apology can be found. Whenever statesmen abandon the plain rules of duty and justice, and base their conduct on the quicksands of supposed expedience, they are involved in a series of errors, which quickly precipitate them into the most serious crimes. But the greatest efforts of human wisdom or virtue are unequal to direct or sustain the mind in the trying scenes which a Revolution induces: it is the belief of futurity, and a sense of religion alone, which can support humanity in such calamities; and their want of such principles rendered all the genius and philanthropy of the Girondists of no practical avail in stemming the disasters of the Revolution (2).

The Girondists had no point of assemblage, like the well-disciplined forces of their adversaries; but their leaders frequently met at the parties of Madame Roland, where all the elegance which the Revolution had left, and all the talent which it had developed, were wont to assemble. This remarkable

(1) Mig. i. 213, 214. Buzot, 84.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. i. 142, 143.



woman, by the concurring testimony of all her contemporaries, exercised a powerful influence over the fortunes of her country. The fire of her genius, the warmth of her feeling, the eloquence of her language, enabled her to maintain an undisputed ascendancy even over the greatest men in France. She lived to lament the crimes perpetrated in the name of liberty, and died a victim to her conjugal fidelity; evincing, in her last moments, a degree of intrepidity rarely paralleled even in the annals of female heroism, and which, had it been general in her party, might have stifled the Reign of Terror in its birth (1).

*Character of Vergniaud.* Vergniaud was the most eloquent speaker of the Gironde, but he had not the vigour or resolution requisite for the leader of a party in troubled times. Passion, in general, had little influence over his mind: he was humane, gentle, and benevolent; difficult to rouse to exertion, and still more to be convinced of the wickedness, either of his adversaries, or a large part of his supporters. But when great occasions arose, and the latent energy of his mind was roused, he poured forth his generous thoughts in streams of eloquence, which never have been equalled in the French Assembly. It was not like that of Mirabeau, broken, and emphatic, adapted to the changing temper of the audience he addressed; but uniformly elegant, sonorous, and flowing, swelling at times into the highest strains of impassioned oratory. That such a man should have been unable to rule the Convention, only proves how unfit a body, elected as they were, is to rule the destinies of a great nation (2).

*Guadet.* Guadet was more animated than Vergniaud: he seized with more readiness the changes of the moment, and preserved his presence of mind more completely during the stormy discussions of the Assembly. Gensonné, with inferior talents for speaking, was nevertheless looked up to as a leader *Barbaroux.* of his party from his firmness and resolution of character. Barbaroux, a native of the South of France, brought to the strife of faction the ardent temperament of his sunny climate; resolute, sagacious, and daring, he early divined the bloody designs of the Jacobins, but was unable to prevail on his associates to adopt the desperate measures which he soon foresaw would be necessary to give them any thing like an equality in the strife (3).

*Of the Jacobins.* Very different was the character of the JACOBINS, that terrible faction, whose crimes have stained the annals of France with such unheard-of atrocities. Their origin draws back to the struggles in 1789, when a certain number of deputies from the provinces met in the convent of the Jacobins, formerly the seat of the Assemblies of the League. The popularity of the club soon attracted the most audacious and able of the democratic party: the nave of the church was transformed into a hall for the meeting of the members; and the seat of the President made of the top of a Gothic monument of black marble, which stood against the walls. The tribune, from whence the orators addressed the Assembly, consisted of two beams placed across each other like a half-constructed scaffold; behind it were suspended from the walls the ancient instruments of torture, the unattended to, but fitting accompaniments of such a scene; numbers of bats at night flitted through its vast and gloomy vaults, and by their screams interrupted the din of the meeting. Such was the strife of contending voices, that muskets were discharged at intervals to produce a temporary cessation of the tumult. A great number of affiliated societies in all the great towns of France, early

(1) Lac. ii. 14, 15. Roland, i. 18, 19.

(2) Th. iii. 137, 138.

(3) Th. iii. 138, 139.

gave this club a decided preponderance : the eloquence of Mirabeau thundered under its roof; and all the principal insurrections of the Revolution were prepared by its leaders (1).

The revolts of the 14th July, the 20th June, and the 10th August, were openly discussed, long before they took place, in the hall of the Jacobins; there were rehearsed all the great changes of the drama which were shortly afterwards to be acted in the Assembly. The massacres of 2d September alone appear to have been unprepared by them; their infamy rests with Danton and the Municipality of Paris. As usual in democratic assemblies, the most violent and outrageous soon acquired an ascendancy; the mob applauded those who were loudest in their assertion of the sovereignty of the people. Fifteen hundred members usually attended its meetings; a few lamps only lighted the vast extent of the room; the members appeared for the most part in shabby attire, and the galleries were filled with the lowest of the populace. In this den of darkness were prepared the bloody lists of proscription and massacre; the meetings were opened with revolutionary songs, and shouts of applause followed each addition to the list of murder, each account of its perpetration by the affiliated societies. Never was a man of honour, seldom a man of virtue, admitted within this society; it had a secret horror for every one who was not attached to its fortunes by the hellish bond of committed wickedness. A robber, an assassin, was certain of admission; as sure as the victim of their violence was of rejection. The well-known question put to the entrants, "What have you done to be hanged, if the ancient *régime* is restored?" exemplifies at once the bond which held them together. Their place of meeting was adorned with anarchical symbols, tricolor flags, and busts of the leading revolutionists of former times. Long before the death of Louis XVI, two portraits, adorned with garlands, of Jacques Clement and Ravallac, were hung on the walls; immediately below was the date of the murder which each had committed, with the words, "He was fortunate; he killed a king." Inferior to their adversaries in learning, eloquence, and taste, they were infinitely their superiors in the arts of popularity; they succeeded with the mob, because they knew by experience the means of moving the mass from which they sprung. Reason, justice, humanity, were never appealed to; flattery, agitation, and terror, constituted their never-failing methods of seduction. The extreme of democracy was the form of government which they supported, because it was most grateful to the indigent class on whom they depended; but nothing was further from their intentions than to share with others the power which they so strenuously sought for themselves. The greatest levellers in theory, they became the most absolute tyrants in practice; having nothing to lose, they were utterly reckless in their measures of aggrandizement; restrained by no feelings of conscience, they reaped for a time the fruits of audacious wickedness. The leaders of this party were Danton, Marat, Robespierre, Billaud-Varennes, St.-Just, and Collot d'Herbois; names destined to acquire an execrable celebrity in French annals, whose deeds will never be forgotten so long as the voice of conscience is heard in the human heart;—who have done more to destroy the cause of freedom than all the tyrants who have preceded them (2).

From the first opening of the Convention, the Girondists occupied the right, and the Jacobins the seats on the summit of the left; whence their designation of "The Mountain" was derived. The former had the majority of

(1) Toul. ii. 232; and v. 137. Chatcaub. Mém. 72, 84. Hist. de la Conv. i. 110, 112. Chatcaub. Mém. 76.

(2) Toul. v. 139. Lac. ii. 10. Mig. i. 214. Buzot,

votes, the greater part of the departments having returned men of comparatively moderate principles. But the latter possessed a great advantage, in having on their side all the members of the city of Paris, who ruled the mob, always ready to crowd at their call round the doors of the Assembly, and in being supported by the Municipality, which had already grown into a ruling power in the state, and had become the great centre of the democratic party. A neutral body, composed of those members whose principles were not yet declared, was called the Plain of Marais; it ranged itself with the Girondists, until terror compelled its members to coalesce with the victorious side (1).

Influence of  
the Jacobin  
Clubs in  
France.

Connected with the parent Club of the Jacobins at Paris, were a multitude of affiliated societies in every considerable town of France, who trained up disciples for the parent establishment, disseminated its principles, and sent up continual supplies of energetic ambition to feed the flame in the capital. The Magistracy also had established relations with all the municipalities of France, who, elected by almost universal suffrage, had generally fallen, as in all civil convulsions, into the hands of the most violent party. The Jacobins, therefore, ruled the whole effective power of the state; nothing remained to the Girondists but the Ministry, who, thwarted by the Municipality, had no authority in Paris. The army, raised during the excitement of the Revolution, could not be trusted against the popular leaders; if it could, the distance at which it was placed, and its active occupation on the frontier, precluded it from being of any service in resisting the insurrections of the capital (2).

Mutual re-  
criminations  
of the Gi-  
rondists and  
Jacobins.

The two rival parties mutually indulged in recriminations, in order to influence the public mind. The Jacobins incessantly reproached the Girondists with desiring to dissolve the Republic; to establish three-and-twenty separate democratic states, held together, like the American provinces, by a mere federal union; and though this design was never seriously entertained by them, except when the advance of the Duke of Brunswick threatened to lead to the capture of Paris, the imprudent conversations of Brissot, and other leaders of the party, and the extravagant admiration which they always professed for the institutions of America, were sufficient to give a colour to the accusation. Nothing more was requisite to render them in the highest degree unpopular in Paris, the very existence of which depended on its remaining, through all the phases of government, the seat of the ruling power. The Girondists retorted upon their adversaries charges better founded, but not so likely to inflame the populace. They reproached them with endeavouring to establish in the Municipality of Paris a power superior to the legislature of all France; with overawing the deliberations of the Convention, by menacing petitions, or the open display of brute force; and secretly preparing for their favourite leaders, Danton, Robespierre, and Marat, a triumvirate of power, which would speedily extinguish all the freedom which had been acquired. The first part of the accusation was well founded even then; of the last, time soon afforded an ample confirmation (3).

Sept. 23.  
State of  
finances.

One of the first cares of the Convention was the state of the finances. From the report of M. Cambon, the minister of finances, it appeared that the preceding Assemblies had authorized the fabrication of two thousand seven hundred millions of assignats, or above L.130,000,000 sterling; a prodigious sum, to have been issued in three years of almost con-

(1) Mig. i. 215.

(2) Mig. i. 216. Lac. ii. 10.

(3) Th. iii. 142, 145.

tinued peace, and clearly demonstrating, that the revenue, from its ordinary sources, had almost entirely disappeared. Of this immense fund, however, only twenty-four millions remained. A new issue, therefore, became indispensable, and was immediately ordered, on the security of the national domains, which were continually increasing, and now embraced more than two-thirds of the landed property of France, from the continued confiscation of the estates of the emigrants (1).

A still more democratic constitution, than that framed by the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies, was at the same time established. All the requisites for election to any offices whatever, were, on the motion of the Duke  
Sept. 24. of Orléans, abolished. It was no longer necessary to select judges from legal men, nor magistrates from the class of proprietors. All persons, in whatever rank, were declared eligible to every situation; and the right of voting in the primary assemblies conferred on every man above the age of twenty-one years. Absolute equality, in its literal sense, was universally established (2).

Roland, at the same time, gave a frightful picture of the massacres which the Jacobin emissaries had spread over all France. "The disorders of Paris," said he, "have been too faithfully imitated in the departments. It is not anarchy which is to be accused for these calamities, but tyrants of a new species, who have sprung up in our newly enfranchised France. It is from Paris that these daily incitements to murder proceed. How can we preserve the people from the most frightful misery, when so many citizens are obliged to remain in concealment for fear of their lives; when invitations to pillage, murder, rapine, and lists of proscription, daily appear on the walls of the capital? How shall we frame a constitution for France, if the Convention charged with it deliberates under the daggers of assassins?" After a vehement debate, a decree against the instigators to murder, and for the establishment of a departmental guard, was passed; but subsequent events prevented it from being ever carried into execution (3).

Accusation  
of Marat by  
the Gi-  
rondists.

The Girondists, foreseeing the character of Robespierre, directed their first attacks against him. Osselin and Barbaroux publicly accused him of aspiring to the dictatorship; but the leaders of their party, not yet aware of the necessity of vigorous measures against so desperate an adversary, quashed the proceeding. Marat was next the object of accusation; a thrill of horror ran through the Convention when he appeared before them: the massacres which he had so strenuously recommended in his journal, "*L'Ami du peuple*," were still fresh in the recollections of the deputies. Vergniaud read a number of that journal, where it was coldly calculated that seventy thousand heads must fall before liberty could be established; the galleries openly applauded the proposal. Another of the Girondists soon after read another paper, published a few days before by the accused, in which he said, "One consideration alone overwhelms me, and that is, that all my efforts to save the people will come to nothing without a new insurrection. When I behold the temper of the majority of the deputies in the National Convention, I despair of the public safety. If, during its eight first sittings, the foundations of a constitution are not laid, nothing more need be expected from its labours. Fifty years of anarchy await you, from which you will never emerge, but by the hands of a Dictator, a true patriot and statesman. O! misguided people, if you but knew how to act." At these words, furious

(1) Th. iii. 151.

(2) Th. iii. 150.

(3) Th. iii. 152, 155.

cries interrupted the speaker; some applauding, others exclaiming, "To the Abbaye! to the guillotine (1)!"

Marat mounted the tribune to reply; it was the first time he had been seen there, and such was the horror at his aspect, that it was long before he could obtain a hearing. He acknowledged the writing to be his, however, and refused to disavow its contents. "To ask me to retract," he added, "is to insist that I should shut my eyes to what I see, and my ears to what I hear; there is no power on earth which can force me to such a change of ideas: I can answer for the purity of my heart, but I cannot change my thoughts; they have sprung from the nature of things." The Jacobins, with tumultuous shouts, testified their applause; many irresolute members, horror-struck at the proscriptions, but yet terrified at their authors, quitted the Assembly. The accused, perceiving his advantage, drew a pistol from his pocket: "Blush!" he exclaimed, "for your rashness, in thus accusing the patriots: If the proposal for an accusation be carried, I will blow out my brains at the foot of the tribune. Such is the reward of my labours, my sufferings, my misery, in the cause of the people!" The Convention concealed its fear under the mask of contempt, and, on the motion of Tallien, voted that the Republic was one and indivisible, and dismissed the accused unpunished, to reap the fruits of a real victory (2).

Louvet  
arnaud  
Robespierre. A more formidable accusation was shortly afterwards brought forward by Louvet, one of the ablest and most intrepid leaders of the Gironde. Roland, as minister of the interior, had made a luminous statement of the situation of the metropolis, in which he had boldly exposed the sanguinary measures of the Commune. "When the principles of revolt and carnage," said he, "are openly avowed and applauded, not only in clubs, but in the bosom of the Convention, who can doubt that some hidden partisans of the ancient *régime*, some pretended friends of the people, veiling their wickedness under the mask of patriotism, have conceived the design of overturning the constitution, and slaking their thirst for blood and gold in the midst of public ruin?" He then read a letter from the President of the second section of the Criminal Tribunal, announcing that his own life and that of his colleagues were menaced, and that, in the language of the times, a *new bleeding* was required for the state. At this announcement, all eyes were turned to Robespierre, who immediately mounted the tribune, and exclaimed, "No one will dare to accuse me to my face."—"I am he who accuse you," said Louvet, with a firm voice and unshrinking eye: "Yes, Robespierre, I accuse you." The tyrant was moved at the glance of his adversary, whose talent and courage he had previously experienced in the hall of the Jacobins. Louvet then, in an energetic and eloquent speech, traced the character and actions of his opponent. He followed Robespierre to the Club of the Jacobins, the Municipality, the Electoral Assembly, eternally calumniating his adversaries and flattering the mob; taking advantage of the passions of a blind multitude, urging it at pleasure to every excess; insulting in its name the majesty of the legislature, and compelling the sovereign power to issue the decrees he commanded, under the pain of rebellion; ordering, though unseen, the murders and robberies of September, to support the usurpation of the Municipality by means of terror; sending emissaries through all France to instigate the commission of similar crimes, and induce the provinces to follow the example, and obey the authority of Paris;

(1) Mig. 218, 219. Lac. ii. 6, 8. Th. iii. 163.

(2) Lac. ii. 8, 9. Th. iii. 167, 170. Hist. de la Conv. i. 75, 76.

incessantly occupied with his own praises, and magnifying the grandeur and power of the people from whom he sprung. "The glory of the revolt of the 10th August," he added, "is common to all; but the glory of the massacres of September 2d belongs to you. On you and your associates may they rest for ever. The people of Paris know how to combat, but not how to murder; they were seen in a body before the Tuileries on the glorious 10th August; but a few hundred assassins alone perpetrated the massacres of September. The eloquence of Roland spoke in vain; the tutelary arm of Pétion was enchained; Danton refused to move; the presidents of the sections waited for orders from the general in command, which never arrived; the officers of the Municipality, with their official scarfs, presided at the executions; and the orders you had given were too fatally obeyed (1)."

<sup>Reply of Robespierre.</sup> The Assembly was strongly moved by the eloquence of Louvet, but he was feebly supported by his friends among the Girondists. He repeatedly appealed to Pétion, Vergniaud, and the other leaders, to support his statements, but they had not the firmness to state boldly the truth. Had they testified a fourth part of what they knew, the accusation must have been instantly voted, and the tyrant strangled in his cradle. As it was, Robespierre, fearful of its effects, demanded eight days to prepare for his defence. In the interval, the whole engines of terror were put in force. The Jacobins thundered out accusations against the intrepid accuser, and all the leaders of the Mountain were indefatigable in their efforts to strike terror into their opponents. By degrees the impression cooled, and the accused mounted the tribune at its close with the air of a victor. The deputies came to regard the accusation as a private quarrel between Louvet and Robespierre, and felt no apprehension for a man whom they regarded, as Barère said, "as a man of the day—a little mover of discord (2)."

In the conclusion of his address, which was nervous and forcible, Robespierre observed, in allusion to the massacres of September 2d, "Without doubt," said he, "the massacres in the prisons were illegal; but what was the revolt on 10th August, or on 14th July? If we are to go back to what is *legal*, who can defend the Revolution, or save you all from a conviction for high treason? Beware how, by such doctrines, you cast a doubt on the origin of your own power. Without illegal measures despotism never yet was shaken; for what sovereign will establish legal forms for his own overthrow? It is said that an innocent individual has perished. The number of the sufferers has been greatly exaggerated; but supposing there was one, it was doubtless too much. He was perhaps a good citizen, one of our best friends. Weep for him—weep even for the unworthy citizens who have fallen under the sword of popular justice; but let your grief, as every human thing, have a termination. But let us, at the same time, reserve some tears for more touching calamities: Weep! a hundred thousand citizens sacrificed by tyranny! Weep! our fellow-citizens massacred in their cradles, or in the arms of their mothers! Have you no brothers or children, or wives, to revenge? The family of French legislators is their country—is the whole human race, excepting tyrants and their supporters. Weep, then, humanity debased under an odious yoke; but be consoled by the reflection, that by calming unworthy discord, you will secure the happiness of your own country, and prepare that of the world." Divided by opposite opinions, the Assembly willingly closed with the proposal of Robespierre to put an end to these personal altercations, and pass to the order of the day. Barbaroux

(1) Mig. i. 224. Lac. ii. 17. Th. iii. 213.

(2) Louvet, 52.

and Lanjuinais vainly endeavoured to maintain the accusation; the leaders of the Gironde themselves, irresolute in action, hesitated to support them. "If, indeed," said Barère, "there existed in the Republic a man born with the genius of Cæsar, or the boldness of Cromwell; if there was to be found here a man with the talent of Sylla, and his dangerous means of elevation; if we had amongst us a legislator of vast ability, boundless ambition, and profound dissimulation; a general, for example, returning loaded with laurels to dictate laws to your choice, or insult the rights of the people, I would be the first to propose against him a decree of accusation. But let us cease to waste our time on men who will fill no place in history; let us not put pigmies on pedestals; the civic crowns of Robespierre are mingled with cypress." They flattered themselves, that a simple passing to the order of the day would extinguish his influence as completely as exile or death, and actually joined with the Jacobins in preventing the reply of Louvet,—a fatal error, which France had cause to lament in tears of blood (1).

It was now evident that the Girondists were no match for their terrible adversaries. The men of action on their side, Louvet, Barbaroux, and Lanjuinais, in vain strove to rouse them to the necessity of vigorous measures in contending with such enemies. Their constant reply was, that they would not be the first to commence the shedding of blood. Their whole vigour consisted in declamation, their whole wisdom in abstract discussion. Moderate in counsel, humane in intention, they were fitted to add to the prosperity of a republic in peace, but totally unequal to the task of guiding it in periods of agitation. They were too honourable to believe in the wickedness of their opponents, too scrupulous to adopt the measures requisite to crush them. When warned of the necessity of striking a decisive blow, they replied, with the most deplorable *sang-froid*, that it was better not to irritate men of a violent temperament (2). The only weapons they could be prevailed on to employ were reason and eloquence, while their adversaries were daily sharpening their poniards. "It were easy to foresee," says Louvet, "what would be the issue of such a contest."

The measures of the Girondists, intended to support the constitution, and crush the ascendancy of the Jacobin faction, were not more fortunate or ably directed than their accusations of individuals. Buzot proposed to establish a guard, specially for the protection of the Convention, drawn from young men chosen from the different departments. Barbaroux at the same time brought forward four decrees, ably conceived, which, if carried into execution, would have effectually overthrown the usurpations of the Municipality. By the first, the capital was to cease to be the seat of the legislature, when it lost its claim to their presence, by failing to protect them from insult. By the second, the troops of the *Fédérés* and the national cavalry were to be charged, along with the armed sections, with the protection of the legislature. By the third, the Convention was to constitute itself into a court of justice, for the trial of all conspirators against its authority. By the fourth, the Convention suspended the Municipality of Paris. This would have established an effectual counterpoise to the influence of the populace of Paris, and have been a decisive blow to the Jacobins and Municipality of that city. Robespierre combated the proposal with all his force. "Paris is now tranquil," said he.—"The blood of September 2d is yet reeking," replied Vergniaud: "The authority

(1) Louvet, 56. Mig. i. 224. Th. iii. 229. Lac. ii. 18, 19.

(2) Louvet, 56, 57. Th. iii. 231.

of the Convention is now universally respected." "You yourself daily call it in question in your seditious assemblies, your sanguinary journals." "Such a decree would be a libel on the people of Paris." "They groan, as well as ourselves, under the assassins who oppress them." "You wish to create a tyranny:" "On the contrary, we strive to put an end to yours:" "You would establish a prætorian band:" "You rule by means of a horde of brigands:" "You are treading in the steps of Sylla:" "You have the ambition of Cromwell." These angry recriminations had no effect but to divert the Assembly from the importance of the real subject at issue, and, fearful of present danger, they rejected the only means of avoiding it in future, by delivering themselves, unprotected to the mob of the capital (1). Thus the Ministry irritated the Jacobins without crushing them, and manifested their distrust in the populace, without providing any counterpoise to their violence.

Jacobins spread the report of a division of the Republic. The Jacobins skilfully availed themselves of these impotent manifestations of distrust, to give additional currency to the report, that the Girondists intended to transport the seat of government to the Southern provinces. This rumour rapidly gained ground with the populace, and augmented their dislike at the Ministry. Their opponents, conscious of the falsehood of the accusation, treated it with contempt; a striking proof of their ignorance of the trifling foundations on which popular favour or dislike is founded. On every occasion the democrats pressed for a decree in favour of the unity and indivisibility of the Republic; thereby insinuating the belief that a federal union was contemplated by their adversaries; a project of all others the most unpopular in the central city of Paris, and afterwards productive of the most ruinous consequences to the moderate party (2).

Preparations for the trial of Louis. All these preliminary struggles were essays of strength by the two parties, prior to the grand question which was now destined to attract the eyes of Europe and of the world. This was the trial of Louis XVI.

The Jacobins had several motives for urging this measure. By placing the King's life in peril, they hoped to compel the Girondists openly to espouse his cause, and thereby ruin them without redemption in the eyes of the people; by engaging the popular party in so decisive a step, they knew that they would best preclude any chance of return to the royalist government. They were desirous, moreover, of taking out of the hands of the Girondists, and the moderate part of the Convention, the formation of a Republican government; and they were probably of opinion that the vengeance of the dead was less to be feared than that of the living; and that a dethroned king was a dangerous neighbour to an infant democracy (3).

Violent agitation commenced by the Jacobins To prepare the nation for this great event, and familiarize them with the tragedy in which it was intended to terminate, the most vigorous measures were taken by the Jacobins over all France. In their central club at Paris the question was repeatedly canvassed, and the most inflammatory harangues were delivered, on the necessity of striking a decisive blow against the royalist faction. The popular societies in the departments were stimulated to present addresses to the Convention, openly demanding the condemnation of the King. The sections of Paris imitated their example. Daily petitions were heard at the bar of the Assembly,

(1) Lac. ii. 12. 13. Mig. i. 225. Th. iii. 221.  
(2) Mig. i. 226. Th. iii. 229. Lac. ii. 14.

(3) Mig. i. 227. Lac. ii. 20. Th. ii. 275.



praying for vengeance on the murderers of the 10th August, and for the death of the last tyrant. In the barbarous language of the age, the President had frequently promised satisfaction to the numerous petitioners who prayed, "de faire rouler la tête du Tyran (1);" and in many proclamations, the monarch they were about to try had been already condemned by the Convention.

A discovery of the iron closet in the Tuileries. increased to a very high degree the popular discontent at the unfortunate Prince. In a cavity in the wall, behind a concealed iron door, were found a great variety of secret papers belonging to the court, placed there, as already mentioned, by order of Louis. Evidence was there discovered of the measures of Talon, the agreement with Mirabeau, the propositions of Bouillé, and many other secret transactions. Roland had the misfortune, by giving publicity to this discovery, to hasten the death of the sovereign he was desirous to save. The papers recovered threw a doubt on the consistency of many individuals on the popular side; but they in no degree implicated Louis in any sinister or unworthy design. They amounted merely to this, that the monarch, severely pressed by his enemies, and deserted by all the world, was desirous of strengthening his party, or received and entertained projects of deliverance from the most zealous of his adherents. But no trace was discovered of any intention, on his part, to subvert the *Constitution* he had sworn to maintain, or do more than extricate himself from the tyranny to which, in the pretended days of freedom, he was really subjected by the democratical faction (2). And is the sovereign to be the only person, in a free country, who is to be denied the privilege of making those efforts in favour of his just rights, which are so zealously asserted for the meanest of his subjects?

The charges brought against Louis were very numerous. Among others, he was accused of having written to the Bishop of Clermont, on 16th April, 1791, "that if he recovered his power, he would restore the clergy and the Constitution to their ancient state;" of having entertained designs of betraying his oaths and overturning the Revolution; of having corresponded with the emigrant faction, whose avowed object was the restoration of the ancient order of things (3). Of all these grounds of complaint, it is sufficient to observe, that in so far as they were founded in fact, they were perfectly justifiable in the circumstances in which he was placed; but that the greater part were base calumnies, equally contradicted by his virtues and his irresolution; and that, if he had really been actuated by the principles imputed to him, he never would have been reduced to the necessity of vindicating himself before a popular assembly.

The preliminary question which occupied the Assembly was, Whether Louis could be legally brought to trial before them. A preliminary point, could Louis be tried. committee, to whom the point was referred for investigation, reported in the affirmative. Mailhé, charged with delivering its report, maintained, "That the inviolability awarded to Louis by the constitution was as *King*, not as an *individual*; that the nation had supplied the inviolability of the sovereign by the responsibility of his ministers; and that, where he had acted as an individual, and not through them, his protection was at an end; that his dethronement was not a punishment, but a change of government; that he was now amenable to the law against traitors and conspira-

(1) Lac. ii. 35. Mig. i. 227, 228.

(3) Mig. i. 228.

(2) Lac. ii. 33, 34. Mig. i. 229. Th. iii. 326.

tors; finally, that the arraignment should be before the Convention, and not any inferior court, because, as it embraced all those interests which were centered in the maintenance of justice, it was impossible that that Supreme Tribunal could violate justice (1), and therefore needless that it should be fettered by its forms."

When this report was received in the Assembly, a stormy discussion arose. The partisans of Louis, though obliged to profess themselves satisfied of his guilt, maintained "that the inviolability was general; that the constitution had not only provided for secret hostilities on his part, but open warfare, and in either alternative, had prescribed no other pain than dethronement; that the nation had placed him on the throne on these conditions; that the Convention was commissioned by the nation to change the government, but not to judge the sovereign; that if the rules of justice forbade his prosecution, much more did the usages of war, which permitted no severity to the vanquished but on the field of battle; that the Republic had no interest in his condemnation, but only in such measures as were called for by the public safety, which would be sufficiently secured by his detention or exile."

There were not wanting, however, some deputies who courageously supported a more humane opinion. "What," said Rauzet, "was the true situation of the King by the Constitution of 1791? He was placed in presence of the national representation as a rival to it. Was it not natural that he should seek to recover as much as possible his lost authority? Did not you yourselves call him to enter upon that strife with the legislative body? In that contest he was overthrown, and he lies now alone and bound at the feet of twenty-five millions of men, and shall they have the baseness to murder the vanquished? Has not Louis repressed, beyond any other man, the eternal desire for power which is so strongly impressed in the human heart? Did he not, in 1789, voluntarily abandon a large part of his authority? Has he not abolished servitude in his domains, admitted philosophers into his councils, and even the empirics imposed upon him by the public voice? Does not France owe to him the convocation of the States-General, and the first establishment of its political rights?" The Girondists supported his opinion; the neutral party was inclined to adhere to the report of the committee (2).

Debate on  
the subject  
in the Con-  
vention.

But the Jacobins openly avowed a more manly doctrine, if such an epithet can be fitly applied to severity towards a fallen enemy. "Citizens," said St.-Just, "I undertake to prove that the opinions advanced on both sides are equally erroneous. The committee who have reported, you yourselves, our adversaries, seek for forms to authorize the trial of the late King—I, on the contrary, affirm that the King is to be regarded more as an enemy whom we have to combat, than as a criminal whom we are to judge; the forms to be observed are not those of private prosecutions, but of public conflicts. Hesitation, delay, in such a case, are the greatest acts of imprudence. After postponing the formation of laws, no calamity could be so great as that of temporizing with a dethroned monarch. The mere act of having reigned is a crime, an usurpation which nothing can absolve, which a people are culpable for having suffered, and which invests every man with a personal right of vengeance. No one can reign innocently; the very idea of such a thing is ridiculous. We must treat such an usurpation as kings themselves have treated all attempts to dethrone them. Was not the memory of Cromwell arraigned for having overturned the authority of Charles? Yet, in truth, the one was not more an usurper than the other; for when a people is

(1) Mig. i. 230.

(2) Mig. i. 231. Th. iii. 295, 296, 305.

sufficiently base to allow itself to be ruled by a tyrant, power belongs of right to the first person who can seize it, and is not more legitimate on one head than the other. The time will come when the world will be astonished that in the eighteenth century we should be so much behind the days of Cæsar: that tyrant was slain in a crowded senate, without any other formality than three-and-twenty strokes of a poniard, and on no other warrant than the liberty of Rome. And now you hesitate to engage in the trial of a man, the assassin of the people, caught in the very commission of his crimes. The men who are charged with the judgment of Louis have a Republic to form; those who scruple at inflicting a just punishment on a King, will never succeed in establishing one. If the Roman people, after six hundred years of hatred of tyrants—if England, after the death of Cromwell, saw the race of sovereigns revive in its bosom, what have all to fear among ourselves who see the axe tremble in the hands of those who have only just begun to wield it, and the people, in the first days of their liberty, awed by the recollection of their former fetters?" Robespierre strongly supported these arguments. "Consider," said he, "what audacity the enemies of liberty have already acquired. In August last the friends of liberty concealed themselves, now they boldly show themselves, and demand impunity for a perjured tyrant. We have heard of his virtues and benefactions. While we have had the utmost difficulty in rescuing the best citizens from a precipitate accusation, the cause of the despot alone is so sacred: that it cannot be too fully or patiently discussed. If we are to believe his apologists, his trial will last several months; it will be protracted till next spring, when the despots will execute a general attack for his rescue. What a career is thus opened to the conspirators! what room afforded for the intrigues of the aristocracy! The Assembly," he added, "has been unconsciously led from the true question before them. There is in reality no criminal process; Louis is not an accused party; you are not judges; you are and can be only statesmen; you have not a verdict to pronounce for or against any individual, but a measure of public importance to adopt, an act essential to national existence to perform. A dethroned king in a Republic is fit for nothing but one of two objects; either to trouble the public tranquillity and endanger its freedom, or to confirm the one and the other. The punishment of death is in general an evil, for this plain reason, that, by the unchangeable laws of nature, it can only be justified by absolute necessity to individuals or the social body; and in ordinary cases it can never be necessary, because the government has ample means of preventing the guilty person from injuring his fellow-citizens. But a dethroned king, in the midst of an ill-cemented Republic,—a king whose name alone is sufficient to rekindle the flames of civil war, can never be an object of indifference to the public safety; and that cruel exception from ordinary rules is owing to nothing but the nature of his crimes. I pronounce with regret the fatal truth; but Louis must die, that France may live. Louis was once a king; he is now dethroned; the momentous question before you is decided by these simple considerations. Louis cannot be tried; his trial is over, his condemnation recorded, or the formation of the Republic is unjustifiable (1). I demand that the Convention shall declare the King traitor towards France, criminal towards human nature, and instantly condemn him in virtue of the right of insurrection."

Majority determined he may be tried. By these extreme propositions, which they did not expect to carry, the Jacobins in a manner ensured the condemnation of Louis.

When such doctrines were once abroad, the moderate party had

(1) Mig. i. 232, 233. Th. iii. 300, 303, 321, 322.

no chance of success with the multitude, but in adopting measures of inferior severity. To have contended for an absolute exemption from punishment, would have appeared tantamount to abandoning the whole principles of the Revolution. Every man felt that he could not do so without endangering his own safety, and exposing himself to the imminent hazard of shortly changing places with his dethroned sovereign (1).

Dec. 3. 1792. Actuated by these motives, the majority of the Assembly, composed of the Girondists and neutral party, decided that the King should be put on his trial before the Convention (2).

*Conduct of the Royal Family since their captivity.* Since his imprisonment in the Temple, the unfortunate monarch had been successively abridged in his comforts, and the severity of his detention increased. At first the Royal Family were permitted to spend their time together; and, disengaged from the cares of government, they experienced the sweetness of domestic affection and parental tenderness. Attended by their faithful servants, Cléry and afterwards Hue, the King spent his time in teaching the Dauphin the elements of education, the Queen in discharging, with the Princesses, the most humble duties; or, like Mary in Lochleven castle, in large works of tapestry. The royal party breakfasted at nine in the apartment of the Queen; at one, if the day was fair, they walked for an hour in the garden, strictly watched by the officers of the Municipality, from whom they often experienced the most cruel insults. Their son evinced the most engaging sweetness of disposition, as well as aptitude for study; bred up in the school of adversity, he promised to grace the throne with the virtues and energy of a humble station. The Princess Royal, in the intervals of instruction, played with her brother; and softened, by every possible attention, the severity of her parents' captivity; while the Princess Elizabeth bore the horrors of her prison with the same celestial equanimity with which she had formerly withstood the seductions of beauty, and the corruptions of a dissipated court (3).

The long evenings of winter were chiefly spent in reading aloud. Racine and Corneille, or historical compositions, were the favourite study of the Royal Family. The King perused, again and again, the history of the English Rebellion by Hume, and sought in the fate of Charles to prepare his mind for the catastrophe which he was well aware awaited himself. His firmness seemed to increase with the approach of danger; the irresolution and timidity by which he was formerly distinguished totally disappeared when his subjects' fate was not bound up with his own. The Queen herself took an example from his resolution. After dinner, the King and his family slept peaceably for a short time—a touching spectacle, standing as they did on the verge of eternity. At night the Dauphin said his prayers to his mother; he prayed for his parents' life, and for the Princess Lamballe with whose death he was unacquainted, and his instructress, the Marquise de Tourzel. When the Commissioners of the Commune were near, he took the precaution, of his own accord, to utter the last supplications in an inaudible voice. The members of the Municipality, who alternately visited the royal family during their captivity, at times displayed the most insolent barbarity, at others a delicate forbearance. Louis conversed with his inspectors on every occasion, and in the most familiar manner, on the subject of their different trades, and frequently surprised them by the extent and accuracy of his practical information. "Are you not afraid," said he to a mason, Mizareau, "that these pillars will give way?"

(1) Mig. i. 233.

(2) Mig. i. 233, Lac. ii. 30, 34.

(3) Lac. x. 132, 135. Cléry, 40, 43. Th. iii. 236, 240, 243.

"They are more solid than the throne of kings," was the reply of the hard-hearted Republican (1).

By degrees, however, the precautions of the Municipality became more vexatious. Their officers never for an instant lost sight of the royal family; and, when they retired to rest, a bed was placed at the door of each room, where the guards slept. Santerre, with his brutal staff, every day made them a visit; and a constant council of civic authorities was held in the lower apartments of the prison. Writing materials were first taken away: soon after, the knives, scissors, needles, and bodkins of the princesses, were seized, after the most rigorous search: a cruel deprivation, as it not only prevented them from relieving the tedious hours by needle-work, but rendered it impossible for them any longer to mend their garments (2).

Rigorously excluded from all communication with the city, it was with the utmost difficulty that they could receive any intelligence as to the events which were going on there. But the ingenuity of the faithful Cléry discovered a method, to a certain degree, of satisfying their desires in this particular, by means of a public crier, with whom he opened a communication, and who placed himself under the windows of the King, and, under pretence of selling the journals, recounted their leading articles with as loud a voice as he could. Cléry, at the appointed hour, placed himself at the window, and eagerly listened to the details, which, in the evening, after the King had retired to bed, he told him in a whisper, without the city officers being aware of the communication (3).

They are separated from each other. But, before long, the magistrates of Paris envied the royal captives the simple consolation which they derived from sharing their misfortunes together. By a resolution of the Municipality, therefore, it was determined that the King and the Dauphin should be separated from the Queen and the Princesses. This decree, as unnecessary as it was barbarous, rent the hearts of the whole family: their grief was so poignant, that it even melted the hearts of the commissioners of the magistracy, who left the room, that they might escape its influence. Shortly after their sorrow received some relief, by being permitted to dine together; their joy at meeting was so excessive that even their stern jailors were moved to tears (4).

Dec. 11, 1792. On the day on which it had been determined that Louis should appear at the bar of the Convention, he was engaged teaching the Dauphin his lesson, when the commissioners entered, and informed the King that they were ordered to take the young Prince to his mother. He tenderly embraced his son, and was profoundly afflicted at the separation. At one the Mayor of Paris, Chambon, entered, and read the decree, by which it was ordained, that Louis Capet should appear at the bar of the Assembly. "Capet is not my name," he replied, "but that of one of my ancestors. I could have wished, gentlemen, that you had left my son with me during the last two hours (5); but that deprivation is a part of the treatment which I have experienced ever since my confinement. I am ready to follow you, not because I recognise the authority of the Convention, but because they have the power to compel me."

When Madame Elizabeth was informed of the measures adopted in regard to the King, she expressed herself fully prepared for the catastrophe which followed. "The Queen and I," she said, "are prepared for the worst: we do not attempt to shut our eyes to his approaching fate: he will die the victim of

(1) Cléry, 52, 53, 58, 59. Th. iii. 282, 283. Lac. x. 138, 142. Th. iii. 281.

(2) Th. iii. 284. Cléry, 62, *et seq.*

(3) Cléry, 79. Th. iii. 285, 286.

(4) Lac. x. 140, 142. Cléry, 69.

(5) Cléry, 117, 120. Th. iii. 229. Lac, x. 174.

his love for the people, for whose happiness he has never ceased to labour since his accession to the throne. How cruelly the country has been deceived! The religion of the King, his firm reliance on Providence, can support him in that cruel extremity. Cléry, you will be left alone with my brother; redouble your attentions to him; we have now none to depend on but you (1)."

The crowd was immense as the King passed through the streets: amidst a thousand revolutionary cries, some countenances indicated the most profound grief. His own appearance differed in no respect from what it had been when he passed, in the days of his prosperity, from one palace to another. Six hundred infantry, and a large body of cavalry, with three pieces of loaded cannon, preceded and followed the carriage (2).

The King  
brought to  
the bar of  
the Assem-  
bly.

The Assembly, warned of the approach of the King, earnestly recommended tranquillity when he entered, "In order," said Barrère, "that the guilty Sovereign may be awed by the stillness of the tomb. Remember the terrible silence which attended his appearance from Varennes,—silence prophetic of the judgment of kings by nations." Louis appeared: the President, Barrère, immediately said, with a faltering voice:—"Louis, the French nation accuses you: you are about to hear the charges that are to be preferred: Louis, be seated." The King sat down with an intrepid air: no signs of emotion appeared in his countenance. The dignity and mildness of his presence was such, that the Girondists were melted to tears; and the fanaticism of St.-Just, Robespierre, and Marat, for a moment, yielded to the feelings of humanity (3).

The charges consisted of an enumeration of the whole crimes of the Revolution, from its commencement in 1789, all of which were laid to his account. His answers, by the admission even of his enemies, were brief and firm: he displayed a remarkable degree of presence of mind, and, in most cases, was victorious over his adversaries, or touched them by the simplicity of his replies. The affair of Nancy, the journey to Varennes, the suppression of the revolt in the Champ-de-Mars, were justified by the decrees of the Assembly; the catastrophe of the 10th March, by the power of self-defence, conferred on him by the laws. To every question of the President, he replied with clearness and precision; denying some, showing that others were the work of his ministers, justifying all by the powers conferred on him by the Constitution. When charged with shedding the blood of the people on the 10th August, only, he exclaimed with, a loud voice:—"No, sir, it was not I that did it." He was careful, in his answers, never to implicate any members of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies: many who then sat as his judges, trembled, lest he should betray them (4).

The Jacobins beheld, with dismay, the profound impression made on the Convention, by the simple statement of truth; by the firm, but temperate demeanour of the Sovereign. The most violent of the party proposed that he should be hung that very night: a laugh of demons followed the proposal from the benches of the Mountain. But the majority, composed of the Girondists and the neutrals, decided that he should be formally tried, and defended by counsel (5).

His return  
to the  
Temple.

When Louis returned to the Temple, the cruel resolution of the Commune was communicated to him, that he was no longer to be permitted to see his family. "My son, at least," he exclaimed, with the most heart-rending accent: "am I never again to see my son? what needless

(1) Cléry, 120.

(2) Lac x. 175. Th. iii. 329.

(3) Lac. x. 175, 176. Mig. i. 235. Th. iii. 331.

(4) Lac. x. 177. Th. iii. 333.

(5) Lac. x. 178. Mig. i. 235, 236.

cruelty to deprive me of that sweet infant!" At half-past eight, the hour when the Dauphin usually went to bed, he earnestly entreated that he might see him for a moment, to give him his blessing; but even this favour was refused by the relentless Municipality. For some time after he was in the deepest distress; but he soon recovered his composure; read, for two hours, a work on religion, and never again lost his serenity of mind (1).

The Convention, less barbarous than the magistrates, the day after, at the petition of the King, decreed that he might enjoy the society of his children, provided they did not return to the Queen during his trial. "You need not give yourself the trouble to pass such a decree," said the Jacobins, "for, unless the Municipality choose, they will not carry it into execution." The King, thinking the children more necessary to the Queen's comfort than his own, declined to take them from her, and submitted to the painful separation with a resignation which nothing could overcome (2).

Generous  
devotion of  
Malesherbes  
and Tron-  
chet. On the following day, the deputies of the Convention announced to him, that he was to be permitted to choose his counsel. He chose M. Tronchet, and M. Target. The first accepted, and faithfully discharged his duty; the latter had the baseness to decline. Napoléon knew how to admire heroism, even when exerted in another's cause; one of his first acts was to promote Tronchet, then an old man, to the important duty of aiding in the formation of the legal code which has given such durable lustre to the name of its author, and he was soon after appointed to the head of the Supreme Court of Cassation (3). The venerable Malesherbes, whose official career had been distinguished by so many sage and useful reforms, now came forward, and volunteered his services in behalf of his Sovereign. In a letter addressed to the President of the Convention, he said, "I have been twice honoured with a place in the councils of my master, when it was the object of ambition to all the world; I owe him the same service, when it imposes a duty which many consider dangerous." This generous offer drew tears from the eyes of many in the Convention: the Jacobins were silent: even reckless ambition, for a moment, felt the ascendant of heroic virtue (4).

Louis was deeply affected at this proof of devotion on the part of his aged friend. When he entered the Temple, he clasped him in his arms, and exclaimed, with tears in his eyes, "Ah! is it you, my friend? you see to what I am reduced by the excess of my affection for my people, and the self-denial which led me to remove the troops intended to protect the throne from the enterprises of the factious. You fear not to endanger your own life to save mine; but it is in vain; they will bring me to the scaffold, I am well aware; but that is of no moment; let us enter upon the defence, as if I were sure to be successful (5): I will gain it in reality through your exertions, since my memory will descend unpotted to posterity."

Malesherbes and Tronchet afterwards called in the assistance of M. Desèze, a celebrated pleader, who at first had espoused the popular side, but had withdrawn from political life since the sombre days of the Revolution commenced. He entered with great earnestness, and his wonted ability, upon his arduous duties. "I have often wished," said the King to Malesherbes, "that I had the means of recompensing the zeal of your colleagues; I have thought of leaving them a legacy, but would it be respected by the Convention? Would it not endanger them?"—"Sire," replied Malesherbes, "the legacy is already bequeathed; in choosing them for your defenders, your Majesty

(1) Lac. x. 180. Cléry, 124. Th. iii. 334.

(2) Ibid. iii. 336.

(3) Bour. v. 122; and iv. 68.

(4) Mig. i. 237. Lac. x. 183, 188. Th. iii. 335.

(5) Hue, 42. Lac. x. 186, 193. Mig. i. 236. Th. iii. 336.

has immortalized their names." His counsel were in continual astonishment at his serenity of mind." "Believe me," said he, "religion has more consolations than philosophy (1)."

When the eloquent peroration of Desèze was read to the King the evening before it was to be delivered to the Assembly, he requested that it might be struck out. "I have to request of you," said he, "to make a sacrifice, which I know will be painful; strike out of your pleading the too touching peroration. It is enough for me to appear before such judges, and demonstrate my complete innocence; but I will not condescend to move their feelings." The same day, he composed his immortal Testament; the most perfect commentary on the principles of Christianity, that ever has come from the hand of kings. "I recommend to my son," said he, in that touching memorial, "if he ever has the misfortune to become king, to feel that his whole existence should be devoted to the good of his people; to bury in oblivion all hatred and resentment, especially for my misfortunes; to recollect that he cannot promote the happiness of his subjects, but in reigning according to the laws; but, at the same time, that a king cannot carry into execution his good intentions, without the requisite authority; that, otherwise, being continually thwarted in his operations, he is rather hurtful than beneficial. I pardon all those who have injured me in my misfortunes; and I pray my son to recollect only their sufferings. I declare before God, and on the eve of appearing at his tribunal, that I am totally innocent of the crimes laid to my charge (2)."

On the 26th December, the King was conducted to the Assembly. He was taken in the carriage of the mayor, with the same military force as before. He evinced as great coolness as on the former occasion; spoke of Seneca, Livy, and the public hospitals; and addressed himself in a delicate vein of pleasantry to one of the Municipality, who sat in the carriage with his hat on. When waiting in the antechamber, Malesherbes, in conversing with the King, made use of the words, "Sire, your Majesty." Treilhارد, a furious Jacobin, interrupted him, exclaiming—"What has rendered you so bold, as to pronounce these words, which the convention has proscribed?" "Contempt of life," replied the intrepid old man (3).

Eloquent  
peroration  
of Desèze.

When they were admitted into the Assembly, Louis seated himself between his counsel; surveyed, with a benignant eye, the crowded benches of his adversaries, and was even observed sometimes to smile as he conversed with M. Malesherbes. In the speech which followed, M. Desèze ably argued the inviolability of the sovereign, and proved, that, if it was destroyed, the weaker party in the Convention had no security against the stronger; a prophetic truth, which the Girondists soon experienced at the hands of their implacable enemies. He examined the whole life of the King, and showed that, in every instance, he had been actuated by the sincerest love of his people. On the 10th August, he observed,—"Was the Monarch under the necessity of submitting to an armed multitude? Was he constrained by law to yield to force? Was not the power which he held in the Constitution a deposit, for the preservation of which he was answerable to the nation? If you, yourselves, were surrounded by a furious and misguided rabble, which threatened without respect for your sacred character, to tear you from this sanctuary, what could you do, other than what he has done? The magistrates themselves authorized all that he did, by having signed the order to repel force by force. Notwithstanding their sanction, the

(1) Lac. x. 195. Huc, 72. Th. iii. 348.

(2) Cléry, 148. Lac, x. 197. Th. iii. 348.

(3) Lac, x. 199. Th. iii. 349.



King was unwilling to make use of this authority, and retired into the bosom of the Convention, to avoid the shedding of blood. The combat which followed, neither was undertaken for him, nor by his orders; he interfered only to put a stop to it, as is proved by the fact, that it was in consequence of an order signed by him, that the Swiss abandoned the defence of the châteaueau, and surrendered their lives. There is a crying injustice, therefore, in reproaching him with the blood shed on the 10th August; in truth, his conduct, in that particular, is above reproach." His conclusion was in these words :—" Louis mounted the throne at the age of twenty; and, even then, he set the example of an irreproachable life : he was governed by no weak or corrupted passion : he was economical, just, and severe. He proved himself, from the beginning, the friend of his country. The people desired the removal of a destructive tax; he removed it : they wished the abolition of servitude; he abolished it in his domains : they prayed for a reform in the criminal law; he reformed it : they demanded that thousands of Frenchmen, whom the rigour of our usages had excluded from political rights, should enjoy them; he conceded them : they longed for liberty; he gave it. He even anticipated their wishes; and yet it is the same people who now demand his punishment. I add no more : I pause before the tribunal of History : remember that it will judge your decision, and that its will be the voice of Ages (1)."

When the defence was concluded, the King rose, and spoke as follows :—" You have heard my defence; I will not recapitulate it : when addressing you, probably for the last time, I declare that my conscience has nothing to reproach itself with, and that my defenders have said nothing but the truth. I have no fears for the public examination of my conduct; but my heart bleeds at the accusation brought against me of having been the cause of the misfortunes of my people, and, most of all, of having shed their blood on the 10th of August. The multiplied proofs I have given in every period of my reign, of my love for my people, and the manner in which I have conducted myself towards them, might, I had hoped, have saved me from so cruel an imputation." Having said these words, he withdrew with his defenders. He embraced M. Desèze, and exclaimed in a transport of gratitude, " This is true eloquence; I am now at ease; I shall have an honoured memory; the French will regret my death (2)."

Debate on the Accusation. A stormy discussion immediately arose in the Assembly. Lanjumeau had the boldness to demand a revocation of the decree by which the King had been brought to the bar of the Convention. " If you insist on being judges," he concluded, " cease to be accusers. My blood boils at the thought of seeing in the judgment-seat men who openly conspired against the throne on the 10th of August, and who have in such ferocious terms anticipated the judgment without hearing the defence." The most violent agitation followed these words. " He accuses," exclaimed the Jacobins, " the 10th August in the midst of the Convention, which owes its existence to that revolt. He wishes to save the tyrant; to-morrow he will deliver us up to his vengeance. To the Abbaye with the perjured deputy! Let the friends of the tyrant perish with him." The Girondists felt the force of this reply. They did not venture to call in question an event which had established the Republic, and could not be arraigned without consigning their power to the dust, themselves to the scaffold (3). The storm was appeased by a proposal to discuss an appeal to the people; it took place, and lasted twenty days.

(1) Mig. i. 237. Lac. x. 208. Th. iii. 349, 352.

(2) Lac. x. 213. Th. iii. 355.

(3) Lac. x. 210. Th. iii. 353.

St.-Just was the most powerful declaimer against the sovereign. "Posterity," he said, "will bless your work : Every generous heart throughout the world will respect your courage. What people has ever made such sacrifices for liberty ? What people has been so often betrayed : what so slow in vengeance ? Is it before the prince that we must justify our proceedings, and is that prince to be inviolable ? The system of the King was apparent gentleness and goodness : every where he identified himself with his country, and sought to fix on himself the affections which should be centred on her. He sapped the laws by the refinement of his conduct—by the interest which unfortunate virtue inspires. Louis was truly a tyrant, and a perfidious and deceitful one. He convoked the States-General, but it was only to humble the noblesse, and reign absolute by their divisions. On the 14th July, and the 5th October, he had secretly provided the means of resistance ; but when the national energy had shattered them in pieces, he made a virtue of necessity, and testified a hypocritical joy for the victory of the people. Since that time, being no longer able to employ force, he has never ceased to strive to corrupt the friends of the people ; he employed the most perfidious dissimulation before the 10th August, and now assumes a feigned gentleness to disarm your resentment. The French long loved the King who was preparing their slavery ; he has since slain those who held him foremost in their affections. The people will no more revolt if the King is just, than the sea will rise if it is not agitated by the winds." Robespierre exclaimed :—"There are sacred forms, unknown to the bar ; there are indestructible principles, superior to the common maxims, consecrated by habit, or confirmed by prejudice. The true condemnation of a sovereign is to be found in the spontaneous insurrection of a people driven to desperation by his oppression ; it is the most sure and the most equitable of all judgments. Louis was condemned long before the decree which called him to your bar. The last and greatest proof which freemen can give of their love to their country, is to sacrifice to it the first movements of returning sensibility. The humanity which trembles in presence of the accused, the clemency which compounds with tyranny, is the worst kind of oppression (1)." Vergniaud replied in a strain of impassioned eloquence. A profound silence prevailed when he arose ; the members listened with breathless anxiety to the first orator of France, pleading the cause of its first subject. "We are accused of provoking a civil war : the accusation is false. But what do they desire, who incessantly preach up assassination against the partisans of tyranny, and apply that name to all those who thwart their ambitious projects ; who invoke poniards against the representatives of the people ; who are never satisfied, unless the minority of the legislature rules the majority, and enforces its arguments by the aid of insurrections ? They are the real promoters of civil war, who thunder forth on these principles in all the public places, and pervert the people, by stigmatizing justice with the name of pusillanimity, humanity with that of conspiracy. Who has not heard in the streets the exclamations of the rabble, who ascribe every calamity to the influence of the sovereign ? If bread is dear, the cause is in the Temple ; if money is scarce, if the armies are ill paid, the cause is in the Temple ; if we are daily obliged to witness misery in the streets, the cause is in the Temple. Who will assure me that these men, who are so ready in exciting these complaints, will not hereafter direct them against the Convention ? that those who assert that the tyranny of the Legislature has succeeded to that of the throne, and that a new 10th of August is necessary to extinguish it ; that a defender is required for the Republic, and

(1) Lac. x. 215, 218. Th. iii. 356.

that one chief alone can save it—who will assure me that these same men will not exclaim, after the death of Louis, with still greater violence than before, if bread is dear, the cause is in the Convention; if money is scarce, if our armies are ill provisioned, the cause is in the Convention; if the machine of government is overcharged, the cause is in the Convention; if the calamities of war have been increased by the accession of England and Spain to the league of our enemies, the cause is in the Convention, which provoked their hostility, by the condemnation of Louis? Who will assure me that among the assassins of September 2d, there will not be found what you now call a *defender*, but who, in reality, will prove a dictator, yet reeking with the blood of his victims; and, if so, to what unheard-of calamities will Paris be subjected? Who will inhabit a city tenanted only by desolation and death? And when the industrious citizens are reduced to beggary, who will then relieve their wants? who will succour their famishing children? I foresee the thrilling reply which will meet them:—‘Go to the quarries, and snatch from the earth some bleeding remains of the victims we have murdered. You have asked for blood in the days of your power: here are blood and corpses; we have no other food now to offer you.’ You shudder at the thought: oh! then unite your efforts with mine to avert so deplorable a catastrophe (1).”

Louis con-  
demned.  
Jan. 15,  
1793.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Assembly unanimously pronounced that Louis was guilty (2). The appeal to the people was rejected by a majority of 423 to 281 (3).

This unanimous vote of the Convention, upon the guilt of Louis, is one of the most instructive facts in the history of the Revolution. That among seven hundred men, great difference of opinion must have existed on the subject, is quite certain, and is abundantly proved by the division which followed, and the narrow majority by which his death was ultimately voted. Yet even the friends of Louis were compelled to commence their efforts for his salvation by voting him guilty. The real grounds of his vindication, those on which the opinion of posterity will be founded, were, by common consent, abandoned. Upon a point on which history has unanimously decided one way, the Convention unanimously decided another (4).

Contrary to  
the opinion  
of almost all  
its members. This result could hardly have taken place in an ordinary court of justice, composed of a few individuals, whose situation was permanent, whose responsibility was fixed, whose duties were restricted to the considerations of evidence. It was the combination of political considerations which proved fatal to Louis: terror at a relapse into the ancient bondage to the throne; dread of the Revolutionary axe, already suspended over the country. Such is the general effect of blending the legislative and the judicial functions; of intrusting the life of a man to a popular assembly, in which numbers diminish the sense of responsibility, without increasing the power of thought; and the contagion of a multitude adds to the force of passion, without diminishing the influence of fear.

But this is not all. This extraordinary vote is a signal proof of the effects of democratic institutions, and of the utter impossibility of free discussion existing, or public justice being done, in a country in which the whole weight is thrown into the popular scale. It is well known, that, in America, the press, when united, is omnipotent (5), and can, at any time, drive the

the truth, that the illustrious accused was entirely innocent.—See THOMAS, iii. 377.

(4) See Toul. iii. 226, 233. Mig. i. 237. Lac. x. 220, 240.

(5) Hall's America, ii. Chap. on the Judiciary.

(1) Lac. x. 231. Th. iii. 369, 373. Mig. i. 238.  
(2) Lac. x. 232. Toul. iii. 178. Th. iii. 377.  
(3) Eight members were absent from bad health; thirty seven declared Louis guilty, but voted only for precautionary measures; 683 declared him guilty. Not one Frenchman deemed it safe to assert

most innocent man into exile; that the judgments of the courts of law are often notoriously unjust on any popular question, from the absence of any counterpoise to the power of the people. The same truth was experienced, in the most cruel manner, on the trial of Louis. That his defenders in the Assembly were men of the greatest talents, is evident from their speeches; that they were possessed of the noblest courage, was afterwards proved by their deaths. Yet these intrepid men were obliged, for his sake, to commence the struggle by voting him guilty. To have done otherwise, would have been to have delivered him unsupported into the hands of his enemies; to have totally destroyed their influence with the people; to have ruined themselves, without saving him. So true is it, that the extreme of democracy is as fatal to freedom as unmitigated despotism; that truth is as seldom heard in the assemblies of the multitude as in the halls of princes; and that, without a due equipoise between the conflicting ranks of society, the balance may be cast as far the one way as the other, and the axe of the populace be as subversive of justice as the bowstring of the Sultan (1).

His death  
resolved on.

The question remained, what punishment should be inflicted on the accused? The vote lasted forty hours. During its continuance, Paris was in the last degree of agitation; the club of the Jacobins re-echoed with cries for his death; the avenues of the Convention were choked with a furious multitude, menacing alike his supporters and the neutral party. As its termination drew near, the tumult increased; the most breathless anxiety pervaded the Assembly, and at length, the President, Vergniaud, announced the result in these words:—"Citizens, I announce the result of the vote: when justice has spoken, humanity should resume its place: there are 721 votes; a majority of twenty-six have voted for death (2). In the name of the Convention, I declare that the punishment of Louis Capet, is DEATH."

Without the defection of the Girondists, the King's life would have been saved. Forty-six of their party, including Vergniaud, voted conditionally, or unconditionally, for his death. They were anxious to save the King; but the democratic fury of the times rendered no mode practicable in their opinion, but the appeal to the people. Almost all of them subsequently perished on the scaffold they had prepared for their sovereign (3).

Among those who voted for death, there were many such as the Duke of Orléans, influenced by base or selfish motives (4). In adopting this timid course, they erred as much in statesmanlike wisdom as moral virtue. Their conduct is thus stigmatized by the greatest master of political ability whom modern Europe has produced. "The Girondists and Jacobins," says Napoleon, "united in condemning the King to death: and yet the majority of the former had voted for the appeal to the people, which was intended to save him. This forms the inexplicable part of their conduct. Had they wished to preserve his life, they had the power to have done so: nothing more was necessary, but to have adjourned the sentence, or condemned him to exile or transportation: but to condemn him to death, and, at the same time,

(1) *Mig.* i. 237.

(2) *Mig.* i. 238, 239. *Th.* iii. 380, 385. *Lac.* x. 233, 240.

(3) *Lac.* x. 241.

(4) The Duke of Orléans, when called on to give his vote, walked with a faltering step, and a face paler than death itself, to the appointed place, and there read these words:—"Exclusively governed by my duty, and convinced that all those who have

resisted the sovereignty of the people deserve death—my vote is for death." Important as the accession of the first Prince of the Blood was to the blood-thirsty faction, his conduct in this instance was too obviously selfish and atrocious not to excite a general feeling of indignation: the agitation of the Assembly became extreme: it seemed as if by this single vote the fate of the monarch was irrevocably sealed.—*See Hist. de la Convention*, ii. 48.

endeavour to make his fate depend on a popular vote, was the height of imprudence and absurdity: it was, after having destroyed the monarchy, to endeavour to tear France in pieces by a civil war. It was this false combination which ruined them. Vergniaud, their main pillar, was the very man who proclaimed as president the death of Louis: and he did this at the moment when the force of their party was such in the Assembly, that it required several months of labour, and more than one popular insurrection, to overturn it. That party would have ruled the Convention, destroyed the Mountain, and governed France, if they had at once pursued a manly, straightforward conduct. It was the refinements of metaphysicians which occasioned their fall (1).” But there were others, doubtless, of a different character; many great and good men, who mournfully inclined to the severer side, from an opinion of its absolute necessity to annihilate a dangerous enemy, and establish an unsettled Republic. Among these must be reckoned Carnot, who, when called on for his opinion, gave it in these words: —“Death! and never did word weigh so heavily on my heart (2).”

But the fate of Louis affords a signal proof, that what is unjust never is expedient, and that its ultimate tendency is to injure the cause for which it was committed. The first effect may frequently answer the expectations of its perpetrators; the last invariably disappoints them. For a few years, the death of the King, by implicating so large a body of men in the support of the Republic, was favourable to democracy: it finally led to the restoration of the monarchy. With what eagerness do the Royalist historians now recount the scene in the Temple! what would the Republican writers give to be able to expunge it from the French annals! It must always be remembered, that the actions of public men will be the subject of thought at a future period; when interest is stifled, and passion is silent; when fear has ceased to agitate, and discord is at rest; but when conscience has resumed its sway over the human heart. Nothing but what is just, therefore, can finally be expedient, because nothing else can secure the permanent concurrence of mankind.

When the counsel of the unfortunate Monarch were called in to hear the sentence, their tears for some time choked their utterance. Malesherbes strove in vain to speak; M. Desèze at length read a protest in which the King solemnly declared his innocence; and Tronchet earnestly entreated the revocation of a decree passed by so slender a majority. “The laws,” it was said, “are passed by a simple majority.” —“Yes,” it was replied, “but the laws may be repealed; but who shall recall human life?” As a last resource, the Girondists proposed a delay for a limited time; but here, too, their fatal divisions gave the victory to their enemies, and sentence of death was pronounced (3).

This decisive step produced the utmost emotion in Paris. All the members of the *Côté droit*, all the avowed or secret royalists, were in consternation; the Jacobins could hardly believe that so great a victory had been gained, as the condemnation of a king, in the midst of a people over whom, a few years before, he was an absolute monarch. They redoubled their activity; put all their forces on foot; kept up an incessant agitation; and earnestly besought all their adherents to be vigilant for the next two days, and secure the fruits of so great a triumph. This audacity had the usual effect which force produces on the masses of men; it paralysed and put to silence the greater number, and excited the most profound indignation in a few resolute minds (4).

(1) Nap. in Las Cases, ii. 184, 185, 190, 191.

(2) Carnot's Memoirs, 97. Lac. x. 288.

(3) Mig. i. 239. Lac. 243. Th. iii. 385.

(4) Th. iii. 399, 399.

Dignified conduct of Louis. Louis was fully prepared for his fate. During the calling of the vote, he asked M. de Malesherbes, "Have you not met, near the Temple, the White Lady?"—"What do you mean?" replied he.—"Do you not know," resumed the King, with a smile, "that when a prince of our house is about to die, a female, dressed in white, is seen wandering round the palace? My friends," added he to his defenders, "I am about to depart before you for the land of the just; we shall there be reunited; and even this world will bless your virtues." His only apprehension was for his family: "I shudder to think in what a situation I leave my children; it is by prayer alone that I can prepare my mind for my last interview with them," was the only desponding expression which escaped him during this period of his captivity (1).

When M. de Malesherbes came to the prison to announce the result of the vote, he found Louis alone, with his forehead resting on his hands, and absorbed in a deep reverie. Without enquiring concerning his fate, or even looking at his friend, he said, "For two hours, I have been revolving in my memory, whether, during my whole reign, I have voluntarily given any cause of complaint to my subjects; with perfect sincerity I can declare, when about to appear before the throne of God, that I deserve no reproach at their hands, and that I have never formed a wish but for their happiness." The old man encouraged a hope that the sentence might be revoked (2); he shook his head, and only entreated his friend not to leave him in his last moments. But he was denied this consolation, by the cruelty of the Municipality; Malesherbes repeatedly applied at the gate, but never again obtained admittance.

The King then desired Cléry to bring him the volume of Hume's history which contained the death of Charles I; he read it sedulously for the few days which intervened before his execution. During the five preceding months, he had perused two hundred and fifty volumes (3).

At length, on the 20th January, Santerre appeared, with a deputation from the Municipality, and read the sentence of death. The King received it with unshaken firmness, and demanded a respite of three days to prepare for heaven; to be allowed an interview with his family, and to obtain the consolation of a confessor. The two last demands alone were conceded by the Convention, and the execution was fixed for the following morning, at ten o'clock. He then resumed his tranquil air, and dined as usual. The officers who guarded him had removed the knives. "Did they suppose me," said he, "base enough to kill myself? I am innocent, and can die without apprehension (4)."

His last interview with his family. The last interview with his family presented the most heart-rending scene. "At half-past eight," says Cléry, "the door of his apartment opened, and the Queen appeared, leading by the hand the Princess Royal, and the Princess Elizabeth; they all rushed into the arms of the King. A profound silence ensued for some minutes, broken only by the sobs of the afflicted family. The King sat down, the Queen on his left, the Princess Royal on his right, Madame Elizabeth in front, and the young Dauphin between his knees. This terrible scene lasted nearly two hours; the tears and lamentations of the royal family frequently interrupting the words of the King, sufficiently evinced that he himself communicated the intelligence of his condemnation. At length, at a quarter past ten, Louis rose; the royal parents gave each of them their blessing to the Dauphin; while the Princess still held the King

(1) Lac. x. 244, 246. Cléry, 158.

(2) Mig. i. 240. Lac. x. 345, 347. Cléry, 159.

(3) Cléry, 159. Th. iii. 283.

(4) Lac. x. 246, 249. Mig. i. 240. Th. iii. 329.

embraced round the waist; as he approached the door, they uttered the most piercing shrieks; 'I assure you, I will see you again in the morning,' said he, 'at eight o'clock.'—'Why not at seven?' exclaimed they all at once. 'Well, then, at seven,' answered the King. 'Adieu, adieu!' he pronounced these words with so mournful an accent, that the lamentations redoubled; and the Princess Royal fainted at his feet. At length, wishing to put an end to so trying a scene, the King embraced them all in the tenderest manner, and tore himself from their arms (1)."

His last  
communion.

The remainder of the evening was spent with the confessor, the Abbé Edgeworth, who, with heroic devotion, discharged the perilous duty of attending the last moments of his Sovereign. At twelve he went to bed, and slept peaceably till five. He then gave his last instructions to Cléry, and put into his hands the little property which he had at his disposal, a ring, a seal, and a lock of hair. "Give this ring to the Queen," said he, "and tell her with what regret I leave her; give her also the locket containing the hair of my children; give this seal to the Dauphin; and tell them all what I suffer at dying without receiving their last embraces; but I wish to spare them the pain of so cruel a separation." He asked for scissors to cut off his hair with his own hands, to avoid that humiliating operation from the hands of the executioners, but the officers refused his request. He then received the sacrament from his confessor, at a little altar prepared by Cléry, in his chamber, and heard the last service for the dying at the time when the rolling of the drums, and the agitation in the streets, announced the preparations for his execution (2).

His execu-  
tion.

At nine o'clock, Santerre presented himself in the Temple. "You come to seek me," said the King; "allow me a minute." He went into his closet, and immediately came out with his testament in his hand. "I pray you," said he, "to give this packet to the Queen, my wife."—"That is no concern of mine," replied the worthy representative of the Municipality; "I am here only to conduct you to the scaffold." The King then asked another member of the Commune to take charge of the document, and said to Santerre, "let us set off." The Municipality next day published the Testament, "as a proof of the fanaticism and crimes of the King;" without intending it, they thereby raised the noblest monument to his memory (3).

In passing through the court of the Temple, Louis cast a last look to the Tower, which contained all that was dear to him in the world; and immediately summoning up his courage, seated himself calmly in the carriage, beside his confessor, with two gendarmes in the opposite side. During the passage to the place of execution, which occupied two hours, he never ceased reciting the Psalms which were pointed out by the venerable priest. Even the soldiers were astonished at his composure. The streets were filled with an immense crowd, who beheld in silent dismay the mournful procession: a large body of troops surrounded the carriage; a double file of soldiers and national guards, and a formidable array of cannon rendered hopeless any attempt at rescue. When the procession arrived at the place of execution, between the gardens of the Tuileries and the Champs-Élysées, he descended from the carriage, and undressed himself, without the aid of the executioners, but testified a momentary look of indignation when they began to bind his hands. M. Edgeworth exclaimed, with almost inspired

(1) Cléry, 173. Th. iii. 394.

(2) Cléry, 181, 182. Th. iii. 395, 397.

(3) Lac. x. 254. Mig. i. 240. Th. iii. 396. Cléry, 183, 194. Edgeworth, 218.

felicity, "Submit to that outrage as the last resemblance to the Saviour, who is about to recompense your sufferings." At these words he resigned himself, and walked to the foot of the scaffold. He there received the sublime benediction from his confessor, "Son of St.-Louis, ascend to heaven!" No sooner had he mounted, than, advancing with a firm step to the front of the scaffold, with one look he imposed silence on twenty drummers, placed there to prevent his being heard, and said with a loud voice, "I die innocent of all the crimes laid to my charge; I pardon the authors of my death, and pray God that my blood may never fall upon France. And you, unhappy people!"—At these words Santerre ordered the drums to beat; the executioners seized the King, and the descending axe terminated his existence. One of the assistants seized the head, and waved it in the air; the blood fell on the confessor, who was still on his knees beside the lifeless body of his sovereign (1).

The body of Louis was, immediately after the execution, removed into the ancient cemetery of the Madeleine, at the end of the Boulevard de la Madeleine, where it was placed in a grave of six feet square, with its back against the wall of the Rue d'Anjou. Large quantities of quick lime were immediately thrown into the grave, which occasioned so rapid a decomposition, that when his remains were sought after in 1815, with a view to their being conveyed to the Royal Mausoleum in St.-Denis, it was with great difficulty that any part could be recovered. Over the spot where he was interred, Napoléon commenced the splendid Temple of Glory, after the battle of Jena, professedly as a memorial of the grand army, but with the secret design of converting it into a monument to the victims of the Revolution, which he did not intend to reveal for many years, and till monarchical feelings were to a certain degree restored. In this, as in so many other great designs, he was interrupted by the calamities which occasioned his fall, and the superb edifice was completed by the Bourbons, and now forms the church of the Madeleine, the most beautiful of the many beautiful structures in Paris. He suffered in the centre of the Place Louis XV, on the same ground where the Queen, the Princess Elizabeth, and so many other of the noble victims of the Revolution perished, where Robespierre and Danton were afterwards executed, and where the Emperor Alexander and the allied sovereigns took their station when their victorious armies entered Paris on the 31st March, 1814. The greatest of revolutionary crimes, the greatest of revolutionary punishments, took place on the same spot: the history of modern Europe has not a scene fraught with equally interesting recollections to exhibit. It is now marked by the colossal obelisk of blood-red granite, which was brought from Thebes, in Upper Egypt, in 1833, by the French Government: the monument which witnessed the march of Cambyses, and survived the conquests of Cæsar and Alexander, is destined to mark, to the latest generation, the scene of the martyrdom of Louis, and of the final triumph of his immortal avenger (2).

Reflections  
on the  
event, and  
Louis's character.

The character of this monarch cannot be better given than in the words of the ablest of the republican writers of France. "Louis inherited a revolution from his ancestors; his qualities were better fitted than those of any of his predecessors to have prevented or terminated it; for he was capable of effecting reform before it broke out, and of discharging the duties of a constitutional throne under its influence. He was

(1) Edgeworth, 222, 225, 227. Th. iii. 309, 340. Lac. x. 255. Mig. i. 241.

(2) Nap. in Las Casas, i. 370, 371. Hist. de la Conv. ii. 13, 14.



perhaps the only monarch who was subject to no passion, not even that of power, and who united the two qualities most essential to a good king, fear of God and love of his people. He perished the victim of passions which he had had no share in exciting; of those of his supporters, to which he was a stranger; of the multitude, which he had done nothing to awaken. Few kings have left so venerated a memory. History will inscribe as his epitaph, that with a little more force of mind, he would have been an unique sovereign (1).

The great and touching qualities, however, exhibited by this unhappy monarch in his latter days; his unexampled sufferings and tragic fate, must not throw into oblivion the ruinous consequences of the indecision and weakness of his conduct on the throne; or make us forget that the calamities, the bloodshed, and irretrievable changes in society produced by the Revolution, sprung from his amiable but unhappy and unconquerable aversion to resolute measures. The man in existence who knew France and the Revolution best has left a decided opinion on the subject. "Had Louis XVI," said Napoléon, "resisted manfully; had he evinced the courage, the activity, the resolution, of Charles I of England, he would have triumphed (2)." The emigration of the nobility, indeed, deprived him of the principal stay of the throne; but it was the known irresolution of his character which was one main cause of that defection, by rendering the whole class of proprietors desperate, when such a chief was at the head of affairs; and the prolonged struggle in Lyons and la Vendée, proved what elements of resistance remained in the nation, even after they had withdrawn.

The reign of injustice is not eternal; no special interposition of Providence is required to arrest it; no avenging angel need descend to terminate its wrathful course; it destroys itself by its own violence: the avenging angel is found in the human heart. In vain the malice of his enemies subjected Louis to every indignity; in vain the executioners bound his arms, and the revolutionary drums stifled his voice; in vain the edge of the guillotine destroyed his body, and his remains were consigned to unhallowed ground; his spirit has triumphed over the wickedness of his oppressors. From his death has begun a reaction in favour of order and religion throughout the globe. His sufferings have done more for the cause of monarchy than all the vices of his predecessors had undone.

It is by the last emotions that the great impression on mankind is made. In this view it was eminently favourable to the interests of society that the crisis of the French monarchy arrived in the reign of Louis. It fell not during the days of its splendour, or its wickedness; under the haughtiness of Louis XIV or the infamy of du Barry; it perished in the person of a spotless monarch, who, most of all his subjects, loved the people; whose life had literally been spent in doing good; whose failings, equally with his virtues, should have protected him from popular violence. Had he possessed more daring, he would have been less unfortunate; had he strenuously supported the cause of royalty, he would not have suffered from the fury of the populace; had he been more prodigal of the blood of others, he would in all probability have saved his own. But such warlike, or ambitious qualities, could not with certainty have been relied upon to arrest the Revolution: they would have postponed it to another reign, but it might, under the rule of an equally irresolute prince, have then come under darker auspices, when the cessation of tyranny had not extinguished the real cause

(1) *Mig. i. 241.*(2) *Nap. in Las Casas, ii, 213.*

of popular complaint, and the virtues of the monarch had not made unpardonable the fury of the people. The catastrophe occurred when all the generous feelings of our nature were awakened on the suffering side; to a sovereign who had done more for the cause of freedom than all the ancestors of his race; whose forbearance had been rewarded by encroachment; meekness by licentiousness; aversion to violence, by the thirst for human blood. A monarch of a more energetic character might have done more to postpone the Revolution; none could have done so much to prevent its recurrence.

Nor was the martyrdom of Louis lost to the immediate interests of the cause for which he suffered. His resignation in adversity, charity in suffering, heroism in death, will never be forgotten. The terrors of the republican reign, the glories of the imperial throne, have passed away; but the spotless termination of the monarchy has left an impression on mankind which will never be effaced. In the darkest night of the moral world, a flame has appeared in the tower of the Temple, at first feeble and struggling for existence, but which now burns with a steady ray, and has thrown a sainted light over the fall of the French monarchy. The days, indeed, of superstition are past; multitudes of pilgrims will not throng to his tomb, and stone will not be worn by the knees of his worshippers: but the days of admiration for departed excellence will never be past; to his historic shrine will come the virtuous and the pious through every succeeding age; his fate will be commiserated, his memory revered, his murderers execrated, so long as justice or mercy shall prevail upon the earth.

## CHAPTER VII.

## STATE OF EUROPE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR.

## ARGUMENT.

State of Europe at the commencement of the French Revolution—Great excitement universally prevalent from its Success—Military and Naval Strength of Great-Britain—Its Parties—Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox—Mr. Burke—Great division of opinion on the Revolution between these Leaders and the Whigs and Tories—State of Austria—Military Resources of the Imperial Dominions—Austrian Netherlands—Destruction of the Barrier Fortresses by the Emperor Joseph—Military State of Prussia—and Russia—Its Army—The Cossacks—Poland—Sweden—Ottoman Dominions—Italy and Piedmont—Spain and Portugal—Holland—Switzerland—France—State of Society in Europe at this Period—Difference between the Northern and Southern States, in point of Military Courage—Internal State of France when Hostilities commenced—Diplomatic Negotiations of the European Powers, previous to the commencement of the Contest—State and termination of the War in Turkey, and gradual extinction of all other Jealousies and Hostilities—Menacing Language of the French to other States—Treaty of Mantua—Declaration of Pflintz—Not acted upon by the Allies—Revolutionary Party in France resolute on War—Declamations of the Girondists in favour of War—Mutual Recriminations, which lead to Hostilities—Strict Neutrality of Great-Britain—Put an end to by the Revolution of 10th August—French System of Propagandism Their Declaration of War against all nations who do not adopt their Principles of Government—Alarm excited in Great-Britain by these Proceedings—Preparations for War in England—England declares War against France—General Reflections on these Events.

“A REVOLUTION in France,” says Napoléon, “is always, sooner or later, followed by a revolution in Europe.” Placed in the centre of modern civilisation, this great country has, in every age, communicated the impulse of its own changes to the adjoining states. Its situation is too commanding to admit of its conquests being disregarded by the neighbouring kingdoms; its moral influence too extensive to suffer them to escape the communication of its prevailing principles.

It was not to be expected that so great an event as the French Revolution, rousing as it did the passions of one, and exciting the apprehensions of another portion of mankind, all the world over, should long remain an object of passive observation to the adjoining states. It addressed itself to the hopes and prejudices of the great body of the people in every country, and, exciting their ill-smothered indignation against their superiors, superadded to the sense of real injuries the more powerful stimulus of revolutionary ambition. A ferment, accordingly, immediately began to spread through the neighbouring kingdoms; extravagant hopes were formed; chimerical anticipations indulged; and the labouring classes, inflated by the rapid elevation of their brethren in France, deemed the time approaching when the distinctions of society were to cease, and the miseries of poverty expire, amidst the universal dominion of the people.

A single successful revolution, the overthrow of one established government, will spread such principles; oceans of blood must be shed before they can be extinguished. In the pursuit of democratic ambition, men will submit to tyranny far severer than monarchical government can venture to impose; in the hope of elevating themselves on the ruins of their superiors, they are content to forego all the real blessings of their condition. Not all the sufferings of Napoléon's reign, not the French

conscription, nor the retreat from Moscow, have been able to extinguish this desire. More than one generation have perished in the struggle, but the ardent spirit is still the same, and springs up, like the phoenix, from the ashes of former existence.

The rise of this terrible spirit, destined to convulse the globe, excited the utmost alarm in all the European monarchies. From it sprang the bloody wars of the French Revolution, undertaken to crush the evil, but which at first tended only to extend it, by engrafting on the energy of democratic ambition the power of military conquest. With them began a new series of strifes; they terminated the contests of kings among each other, and commenced that of one social principle against another. Wars, thenceforward, became the result of conflicting opinions rather than contending interests, and the jealousies of sovereigns amongst each other were forgotten in the vehement animosities of their subjects. They assumed a less interested, but more terrible character; the passions which were roused brought whole nations into the field, and the strife which ensued involved every thing which was most dear to all classes of society (1).

Austria, Russia, and England, were at this period the great powers of Europe; they bore, accordingly, the principal part in the long and desperate struggle which ensued. Though little inclined for a contest, they were all in a situation capable of great exertions. Years of repose had fitted them to enter with unfettered resources upon a theatre where unprecedented sacrifices were to be required.

England. Nine years of peace had enabled Great-Britain to recover, in a great degree, the losses and exhaustion of the American war. If she had lost one empire in the Western, she had gained another in the Eastern world: the wealth of India began to pour into her bosom; and a little island in the west of Europe already exercised a sway over realms more extensive than the arms of Rome had reduced to subjection. A vast revenue, amounting to L.7,000,000, was already derived from her Indian possessions; and, although nearly the whole of this great sum was absorbed in their costly establishment, yet her rulers already looked forward with confident hope to the period, now never likely to be realized, when the empire of Hindostan, instead of being as heretofore a burden, should be a source of revenue to the ruling state, and the wealth of India really become that mine of gold to Britain, which it had long proved to numbers of her children (2). Her national debt, amounting to L.244,000,000, and occasioning an annual charge of L.9,317,000, was indeed a severe burden upon the industry of the people; and the taxes, though light in comparison of what have been imposed in later times, were still felt as oppressive; but, nevertheless, the resources of the state had augmented to an extraordinary degree during the repose which had prevailed since the conclusion of the former contest. Commerce, agriculture, and manufactures, had rapidly increased; the trade with the independent states of North-America had been found to exceed what had been enjoyed with them when in a state of colonial dependence; and the incessant exertions of every individual to better his condition, had produced a surprising effect upon the accumulation of capital and the state of public credit. The three per cents, from 57, at the close of the war, had risen to 99; and the overflowing wealth of the capital was already finding its way into the most circuitous foreign trades, and hazardous distant investments. The national revenue amounted to L.16,000,000, and the army included 32,000 soldiers in the British isles,

(1) Mig. i. 120. Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 199.

(2) Ann. Reg. xviii. 153.

besides an equal force in the East and West Indies, and thirty-six regiments of yeomanry; but these forces were rapidly augmented after the commencement of the war, and, before 1796, the regular army of Britain amounted to two hundred and six thousand men, including forty-two thousand militia. More than half of this force, however, was required for the service of the colonies; and experience has proved, that Britain can never collect above forty thousand men upon any one point on the continent of Europe. The real strength of England consisted in her inexhaustible wealth, in the public spirit and energy of her people, in the moral influence of centuries of glory, and in a fleet of a hundred and fifty ships of the line, which gave her the undisputed command of the seas (1).

But, though abounding in all the resources, England, at this period, had little of the moral strength, so necessary in war. During the disastrous contest in America, the national glory had been seriously tarnished. Two large armies had laid down their arms to the enemy; and even the ancient supremacy of the seas seemed to have been put in hazard, when the combined fleets of France and Spain rode triumphant in the British Channel. The glorious defence of Gibraltar alone had maintained the ancient celebrity of the English arms; nor was either the army or the navy in such a state as to render any early success probable. Abuses of the most flagrant description existed in every department of the land forces; young men were appointed to commissions by purchase, or in consequence of parliamentary influence, without any knowledge of their profession; promotion was seldom awarded to real merit; and no academies or schools were in existence to teach the inexperienced officer even the rudiments of the military art. It was by slow degrees, and in the school of adversity, that the British army was improved, and her commanders rendered capable of turning to good account that undaunted courage, which in every age has formed the honourable characteristic of the British people (2).

England, like the other monarchies of Europe, had slumbered on, contented, prosperous, and for the most part inglorious, during the eighteenth century. The bright aurora with which it was ushered in, in the days of Eugene and Marlborough, had afforded no true promise of the general character of the political era which followed them: the fierce passions, the heart-stirring feelings, the enduring energy of the civil wars, had passed into the page of history, and, with the licentious profligacy of Charles II, were pictured only in contemporary annals, or the reflecting mirror of the national theatre. The arms of Frederick, and the administration of Chatham, alone cast a fleeting lustre over the general monotony of the period; but even their glories were the result of the ambition of kings or the rivalry of cabinets, and partook not of the profound interest of the theological contests which had preceded, or the political passions which followed them. The strife of religion had ceased, that of equality had not commenced; between the two there intervened a long repose of a hundred years, illustrated by few glories, stained by still fewer crimes, during which the fervour springing from the former great convulsion insensibly expired, and the seeds destined to produce a still fiercer collision were gradually ripening to maturity.

It was a generally received opinion among the philosophers and statesmen of this period, that society had at length assumed a settled and permanent form, that all the great causes of discord had been extinguished, and that

(1) *Jom. i. 250. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 124. Report of Finance Committee, May 10, 1791. State Papers. James, i. Table i, App. Febrer's Tables, 247.*

(2) *Jom. i. 251.*

history would never again have to commemorate the vehement contentions and tragic incidents which had arisen in an earlier period of human existence. Adam Smith observed, that while the population of America was doubling every five-and-twenty years, that of Europe was slumbering on with an increase which would hardly arrive at the same result in five hundred; while Gibbon lamented that the period of interesting incident was past, and that the modern historian would never again have to record the moving events and dismal catastrophes of ancient story. Such were the anticipations of the greatest men of the age, on the verge of a period destined to be illustrated by the blood of Robespierre, the constancy of Pitt, and the triumphs of Nelson; when the human race, mowed down by the merciless sword of Napoleon, was to spring up again with an elasticity almost equalling the far-famed rapidity of Transatlantic increase (1).

The opinions of the country, as might have been expected on so great an event, were divided on the French Revolution. The young, the ardent, the philosophical, were sanguine in their expectations of its success; a new era seemed to have dawned upon the world; from the rise of freedom in that great empire, the fetters of slavery, and the bonds of superstition appeared to be dropping from the hands of the human race. It was not merely the factious, the restless, and the ambitious, who entertained these opinions; they were shared by many of the best and wisest of men; and in England, it might with truth be said, what an eloquent historian has observed of Europe in general (2), that the friends of the French Revolution comprised at that period the most enlightened and generous of the community. It was not *then* that its tendency was, or could be, generally perceived (3).

But if the changes in France were regarded with favour by one, they were looked on with utter horror by another class of the community. The great majority of the aristocratic body, all the adherents of the church, all the holders of office under the monarchy, in general the great bulk of the opulent ranks of society, beheld them with apprehension or aversion. Many of those who had life before them, rejoiced in the changes which society seemed about to undergo; those who had passed through it, trembled at their approach: those who had nothing to lose, had no fears of the consequences of innovation; those who had acquired, or inherited much, were justly apprehensive that they would be the first objects of spoliation. These were the general divisions of society; but of course they were modified by the temper or habits of thought in different individuals, and the partisans of innovation numbered many of the most ancient and illustrious noble families among their supporters.

Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt. At the head of the first party was Mr. Fox, the eloquent and illustrious champion of freedom in every part of the world.

Descended of a noble family, he inherited the love of liberty which had long been hereditary in his race, and by the impetuous torrent of his eloquence long maintained his place as leader of the opposition of the British empire. His talents for debate were of the very highest order; and in the impassioned energy with which he delivered his opinions, he never was exceeded by any orator in the English Parliament. Though he was too indolent to have acquired extensive erudition, and was often indebted, like Mirabeau, for the

(1) The population of Prussia is now doubling in 26; that of Britain in 42; that of Austria in 69; that of France in 105; that of Russia in 66 years.—DUPIN, *Force Com. de France*, i. 36.

(2) Bot. i. 70.

(3) The decided democrats in Great Britain at that period were by no means numerous. They were estimated by Mr. Burke, who was now inclined to diminish the dangers of the time, at eighty thousand.—BURKE, viii. 140, 141.

facts connected with the subjects of discussion rather to the industry of others than his own research, yet no one could make a more skilful use of the information with which he was furnished, or gathered in the course of debate; or descant with more originality on a subject apparently exhausted by the efforts of others. Profuse, dissipated, and irregular in private life, he had none of the weight, ever so powerful in England, which arises from the purity of personal character; but amidst all his frailties, the warmth of his heart and generosity of his disposition secured the ardent attachment of a numerous body of private friends, embracing a large proportion of the ablest men and oldest families in the state; while his vehement and impassioned oratory readily commanded the admiration of that numerous class who longed after more popular government, or the general license of a revolution. But his intellect was not equal to his eloquence; his judgment was inferior to his debating power: sincere in his attachment to freedom, he advocated, during the best part of his life, a political system, which was entailing upon the country where it arose the most degrading bondage; passionately devoted to the cause of liberty, he continued constant in his admiration of those frantic innovations which, more than the coalition of kings, against which the thunders of his eloquence were directed, rendered impossible its duration in the first of European monarchies.

Mr. Pitt was the leader of the second party, which at the commencement of the French Revolution was in the full possession of government, and supported by a decided majority in both Houses of Parliament. Modern history has hardly so great a character to exhibit. Inheriting from his father, the first Lord Chatham, a patriotic and truly British spirit, he early imbibed, at the same time, a strong attachment to those liberal principles on which the administration of that illustrious man was founded, and which had given to his government such general and deserved popularity. His early career was chiefly distinguished by these sentiments, and his great abilities, from the very first, gave him a distinguished place in Parliament; but circumstances soon arose which called forth the latent powers of his mind, and exhibited in full lustre the indomitable firmness of his character. Mr. Fox and Lord North had formed a coalition, after their chief cause of discord had been extinguished by the termination of the American war; and, strong in the possession of an apparently invincible majority in the Lower House, had ventured upon the bold measure of bringing in a bill which took from the East-India Company the government of India, and vested it in certain commissioners, to be appointed, not by the crown, but by the House of Commons. It is impossible to doubt that such a change, if carried into execution, would have subverted the constitution, by the establishment of an *imperium in imperio*, possessed of greater authority and influence than the executive. But this catastrophe was averted by the firmness and sagacity of the Monarch who then held the British sceptre. Perceiving at once the full extent of the danger, well aware, in the emphatic words of Lord Thurlow, "that this bill, if carried, would take the crown from the King's head, and place it on that of Mr. Fox (1)," he instantly resolved to interpose his influence to prevent it from passing into a law, and, if necessary, retire to Hanover, rather than continue in Britain, the mere instrument of a parliamentary oligarchy. By his exertions Dec. 8, 1783. the bill, after having passed the Commons by a great majority, was thrown out, by a slender majority, in the House of Lords; and this led to the immediate resignation of the Coalition Ministry. The King instantly sent for

(1) Parl. Hist. xxiv. 125.

Mr. Pitt, and on the 12th January, 1784, he took his seat in the House of Commons as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Never did a more arduous struggle await a minister. The Opposition, led by the impetuous energy of Fox, aided by the experienced influence and admirable temper of Lord North, were possessed of a great majority in the Lower House, and treated at first with the utmost scorn, this attempt on the part of a young man of six-and-twenty to dispossess them of the government. But it was soon evident, that his talents were equal to the task, how arduous and apparently hopeless soever. Invincible in resolution, and yet cool in danger; possessed of a moral courage which nothing could overcome; fertile in resources, powerful in debate, eloquent in declamation,—he exhibited a combination of great qualities, which for political contests never was excelled. A pure and irreproachable private character, gave his opponents no weak side wherein to assail the panoply with which he was surrounded: a temperament, the energies of which were wholly concentrated on national objects, left him no room for selfish passion or private gratification. Incorruptible, though wielding the wealth of England and the Indies; fearless, though combating alone the whole weight of an apparently irresistible Opposition; cool, though tried by all the means which could overcome the firmest patience; cautious, when prudence counselled reserve; energetic and eloquent, when the moment for action had arrived; he successfully withstood the most formidable parliamentary majority which had appeared in English history since the Revolution, and ultimately remained victorious in the struggle. An administration thus tried in its infancy, was proof against any other danger in its maturer years: the intellect of its head clearly and at once perceived both the peril of the French revolutionary principles, and the expedience of making no attempt by external means to check its progress; and, fortunately for the cause of freedom throughout the world, that great convulsion found the British government in the hands of one, alike friendly to the cause of freedom, and hostile to the excesses which so often lead to its destruction. An attentive observer of the progress of the Revolution, therefore, he cautiously abstained from any act which might involve England in any hostility with its distracted neighbour; and, though strongly pressed in the outset to take a part in the struggle, he maintained a strict neutrality, when the German armies had penetrated to the very heart of France, and the moment seemed to have arrived when it was possible to terminate, by a single hostile demonstration, the rivalry of four centuries.

*Mr. Burke.* Mr. Burke was the leader of a third party, composed of the old Whigs, who supported the principles of the English, but opposed those of the French Revolution. This celebrated man had long combated in the ranks of Opposition with Mr. Fox, and the warmest private friendship had cemented their political alliance; but on the breaking out of the French Revolution they embraced different views (1). Mr. Fox warmly applauded its principles, and declared in the House of Commons, that “the new constitution of France was the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any age or country.” Mr. Burke, on the other hand, gifted with greater political sagacity and foresight, early exerted his talents to oppose the levelling principles which that convulsion had introduced; and his work on the French Revolution produced, perhaps, a greater impression on the public mind than any which has yet appeared in the world. It abounds in eloquent passages, profound wisdom, and discrimi-

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 114.



nating talent; but, vast as its influence and unbounded as its reputation were when it first appeared, its value was not fully understood till the progress of events had demonstrated the justice of its principles. The division on this vital question for ever alienated these illustrious men from each other, and drew tears from both in the House of Commons; an emblem of the effects of this heart-stirring event upon the charities of private life, of the variance which it introduced into the bosom of domestic families, and between friendships which "had stood the strain of a whole lifetime (1)."

Division between Mr. Burke and Mr. Fox on the French constitution. The occasion on which this momentous separation took place, was in the debate on the new constitution proposed for the provinces of Canada, in 1791; a remarkable coincidence, when the subsequent events in that colony are taken into consideration, and the vehement strife between the monarchical and republican principles, of which it afterwards became the theatre. So strongly did both these illustrious statesmen, but especially Mr. Burke, feel on the all-engrossing topic of the French Revolution, that they mutually introduced it into almost all the debates which took place in the House of Commons at that period; and it was especially the subject of vehement and impassioned declamation, on occasion of the debate on Mr. Baker's motion relative to a war with Russia;

April 15, 1792.  
April 8.

and the first introduction of the Canada Government Bill, subjects which not unnaturally led to the supposed tendency of the French Revolution on the external relations and internal happiness of nations. From that time a rupture between these two great men was distinctly foreseen, both by their friends and the public. It was, in truth, unavoidable; and is to be regarded as the index to the schism which must ensue in every free community, on occasion of strong democratic excitement, between those who adhere to the landmarks of the past, and those who are willing to adventure on the dark sea of future innovation. Still, however, the external appearances of friendship were maintained between them; they visited, though not so frequently as in former years; and, on the 6th of May, when the Canada Bill was to be debated in committee, they not only walked to the House together, but Mr. Fox treated Mr. Burke, in a previous conversation, with confidence, and mentioned to him a political circumstance of some delicacy. But the feelings of the latter were too ardent to be restrained: the future, big with disaster, revealed itself so clearly to his view, that it obliterated the past, overshadowed the present; and, in the debate which followed on that night, these two illustrious men were for ever severed, the popular party in Great-Britain permanently rent in twain. The debates on this subject possess the highest interest. They not only embrace the most thrilling event in the biography of both, but they constitute an era in the history of Europe during its most eventful period—the destinies of civilisation hung upon their words (2).

Argument of Mr. Fox for the French Revolution. On the part of Mr. Fox it was urged on this occasion, and in the previous debate on the Russian armament—"Without entering into the question whether hereditary honours are in themselves an advantage or an evil, the point which the House has now to consider, is, Whether there is any thing in them so peculiarly advantageous as to incline us to introduce them into a country where they are unknown, and by such means distinguish Canada from all the other colonies of the New World. In countries where they make a part of the constitution it is not wise to destroy

(1) Ann. Reg. xxiii. 136.

(2) Parl. Deb. xxix. 362; and Burke's Speeches, iv. 2, 3.

them; but it is a very different matter to give them birth and life in a country where they at present do not exist. It is impossible to account for such an attempt, except on the principle that as Canada was formerly a French colony, there might be an opportunity of reviving those titles of honour, the extinction of which some gentlemen so much deplore, and of reviving in the West that spirit of chivalry which has fallen into disgrace in a neighbouring country. Are those red and blue ribbons, which have lost their lustre in the Old World, again to shine forth in the New? What can be so absurd as to introduce hereditary honours in the New World, where they are so much the object of undisguised aversion? The proposed Upper Chamber would be equally objectionable if the council were hereditary, for such an assembly would be nothing more than a tool in the hands of the royal authority. Equally objectionable is the clause for making provision for the Protestant clergy, by enacting that, in all grants by the Crown of unappropriated lands, one-seventh should be given to the Protestant clergy. What can be so monstrous as such a fundamental rule in a country where the great bulk of the people are Catholics? Even if they were all Protestants it would still be objectionable; how much more so, therefore, when the whole of the Protestants, such as they are, are much subdivided, and the large proportion of them are Presbyterians, dissenters, or subordinate sects.

“Feeble as my powers are in comparison with my honourable friend’s, whom I must call my master, for every thing that I know in politics I owe to him, I should yet ever be ready to maintain my principles even against his superior eloquence. I will maintain that the rights of man, which he states as chimerical and visionary, are, in fact, the basis and foundation of every rational constitution, and even of the British constitution itself, as the statute-book abundantly proves; for what is the original compact between king and people there recognised, but the recognition of the inherent rights of the people as men, which no prescription can supersede, and no accident remove or obliterate?

“If these principles are dangerous to the constitution, they are the principles of my right honourable friend, from whom I learned them. During the American war we have together rejoiced at the success of a Washington, and mourned almost in tears for the fate of a Montgomery. From him I have learned that the revolt of a whole people cannot be the result of incitement or encouragement, but must have proceeded from provocation. Such was his doctrine when he said, with equal energy and emphasis, that he could not draw a bill of indictment against a whole people. I grieve to find that he has since learned to draw such an indictment, and to crown it with all the technical epithets which disgrace our statute-book, such as false, malicious, wicked, by the instigation of the devil, or not having the fear of God before your eyes. Taught, by my right honourable friend, that no revolt of a nation can spring but from provocation, I could not help feeling joy, ever since the constitution of France was founded on the rights of man—the basis on which the British constitution itself is rested. To vilify it, is neither more nor less than to libel the British constitution, and no book my right honourable friend can write, how able soever, no speech he can deliver, how eloquent soever, can induce me to change or abandon that opinion.

“I was formerly the strenuous advocate for the balance of power, when France was that intriguing restless nation which she had formerly proved. Now that the situation of France is altered, and that she has *erected a government from which neither insult nor injury can be apprehended by her neighbours*, I am extremely indifferent concerning the balance of power, and

shall continue so till I see other nations combine the same power with the same principles of government as that of Old France. The true principle of the balance of power is not to keep every state exactly in its former condition, for that is impossible, but to prevent any one obtaining such an ascendancy as to be dangerous to the rest. No man can say that Russia will be the successor of France in this respect. Her extent of territory, scanty population, and limited revenue, render her power by no means formidable to us: she is a power whom we can neither attack, nor be attacked by: and is it with such a power we are to commence hostilities in order to prop up the decaying Turkish empire, the overthrow of which would be more likely to prove advantageous than injurious to our interests. If we compare the present state of France with its past condition, both as respects the politics of Europe and the happiness of the people, even those who most detest the Revolution must see reason to rejoice in its effects. I cannot but applaud the government of France, in its internal tendency, as good, because it aims at the happiness of those who are subject to it. Different opinions may be entertained by different men as to the change of system that has taken place in that country; but I, for one, admire the new constitution of France, considered altogether, as the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which has been erected on the foundations of human integrity in any age or country (1)."

Argument against it by Mr. Burke, and rupture between them.

Mr. Burke commenced his reply in a grave and solemn tone, befitting the solemnity of the occasion, and the rending asunder of ties which had endured unbroken for a quarter of a century.

"The House," said he, "is now called upon to do a high and important act: to appoint a legislature for a distant people, and to affirm its own competency to the exercise of such a power. On what foundation is such an assumption to rest? Not, surely, on a vague conception of the rights of man; for, if such a doctrine is admitted, all that the House should do, is to call together the whole male inhabitants of Canada, and decide by a majority of their votes what form of government they are to receive. Setting aside so absurd a proposition, on what must this House found its competence to legislate at all on this matter? Clearly on the law of nations, and the acquired title so to legislate from the right of conquest, and a cessation of the rights of the old government, obtained by us in the treaty which confirmed it. These principles bind us to legislate in an equitable manner for the people of Canada, and they are in return to owe allegiance to us. The question then is, on what basis is this new government to be formed? Are we to frame it according to the old light of the English constitution, or by the glare of the new lanterns of the clubs at Paris and London?"

"In determining this point, we are not to imitate the example of countries which have disregarded circumstances, torn asunder the bonds of society, and the ties of nature. To the constitution of America, doubtless, great attention is due; and it is of importance that the people of Canada should have nothing to envy in the constitution of a neighbouring state. But it is plain that they have not the same elements for the enjoyment of republican freedom which exist in the United-States. The people of America have a constitution as well adapted to their character and circumstances as they could have; but that character and these circumstances are essentially different from that of the French Canadians. The Americans have derived from their Anglo-Saxon descent a certain quantity of phlegm, of old English good-nature, that fits

(1) *Parl. Hist.* xxix. 107, 248, 379; and *Fox's Speeches*, iv. 217, 204, 199.

them better for a republican government. They had also a republican education; their form of internal government was republican, and the principles and vices of it have been restrained by the beneficence of an over-ruling monarchy in this country. The formation of their constitution was preceded by a long war, in the course of which, by military discipline, they had learned order, submission, and command, and a regard for great men. They had learned what a King of Sparta had said was the great wisdom to be learned in his country—the art of commanding and obeying. They were trained to government by war, not by plots, murders, and assassinations.

“But what are we to say to the ancient Canadians, who, being the most numerous, are entitled to the greatest attention? Are we to give them the French constitution—a constitution founded on principles diametrically opposite to ours, that could not assimilate with it in a single point; as different from it as wisdom from folly, as vice from virtue, as the most opposite extremes in nature—a constitution founded on what was called the rights of man? But let this constitution be examined by its practical effects in the French West-India colonies. These, notwithstanding three disastrous wars, were most happy and flourishing till they heard of the rights of man. As soon as this system arrived among them, Pandora’s box, replete with every mortal evil, seemed to fly open, hell itself to yawn, and every demon of mischief to overspread the face of the earth. Blacks rose against whites, whites against blacks, and each against the other, in murderous hostility; subordination was destroyed, the bonds of society torn asunder, and every man seemed to thirst for the blood of his neighbour.

‘Black spirits and white, blue spirits and gray,  
Mingle, mingle, mingle.’

All was toil and trouble, discord and blood, from the moment that this doctrine was promulgated among them; and I verily believe that wherever the rights of man are preached, such ever have been, and ever will be the consequences. France, who had generously sent them the precious gift of the rights of man, did not like this image of herself reflected in her child, and sent out a body of troops, well-seasoned too with the rights of man, to restore order and obedience. These troops, as soon as they arrived, instructed as they were in the principles of government, felt themselves bound to become parties in the general rebellion, and, like most of their brethren at home, began asserting their rights by cutting off the head of their general.

“Dangerous doctrines are now encouraged in this country, and dreadful consequences may ensue from them, which it is my sole wish and ambition to avert, by strenuously supporting, in all its parts, the British constitution. The practice now is, with a certain party, to bestow upon all occasions the very highest praise upon the French constitution, and it is immaterial whether this praise be bestowed upon the constitution or the revolution of that country, since the latter has led directly to the former. To such a length has this infatuation been carried, that whoever now disapproves of the anarchy and confusion that have taken place in France, or does not subscribe to the opinion that order and liberty are to emanate from it, is forthwith stigmatized as an enemy to the British constitution; a charge equally false, unfair, and calumnious. Doctrines of this sort are at all times dangerous, but they become doubly so when they are sanctioned by so great a name as that of the right honourable gentleman, who always puts his opinions in the clearest and most forcible light, and who has not hesitated, in

this very debate, to call the French constitution the most glorious and stupendous fabric ever reared by human wisdom.

"That constitution, or revolution, whichever they choose to call it, can never serve the cause of liberty, but will inevitably promote tyranny, anarchy, and revolution. I have never entertained ideas of government different from those which I now maintain. Monarchy, I have always thought, is the basis of all good government; and the nearer to monarchy any government approaches, the more perfect it is, and *vice versâ*. Those who are anxious to subvert the constitution are now, indeed, few in number in this country; but can we be sure that this will always be the case, or that the time may never come, when, under the influence of scarcity or tumult, the monarchical institutions of the country may be threatened with overthrow? Now, then, is the time to crush this diabolical spirit, and watch, with the greatest vigilance, the slightest attempt to subvert the British constitution.

"It is perhaps indiscretion at any period, but especially at my advanced years, to provoke enemies, or give friends an occasion for desertion; but if a firm and steady adherence to the British constitution should place me in such a dilemma, I will risk all, and with my last words exclaim,—Fly from the French constitution."—"There is no loss of friends," said Mr. Fox.—"Yes," said Mr. Burke, "there *is* a loss of friends. I know the price of my conduct: I have done my duty at the price of him I love: our friendship is at an end. With my last breath I will earnestly entreat the two right honourable gentlemen who are the great rivals in this house, that, whether they hereafter move in the political hemisphere as two flaming meteors, or walk together like brethren, hand in hand, to preserve and cherish the British constitution; to guard it against innovation, and save it from the dangers of theoretic alterations. It belongs to the infinite and unspeakable Power, the Deity, who with his arm hurls a comet, like a projectile, out of its course, and enables it to endure the sun's heat and the pitchy darkness of the chilly night, to aim at the formation of infinite perfection; to us, poor, weak, incapable mortals, there is no safe rule of conduct but experience (1)."

Their final separation. Mr. Fox rose to reply, but tears for some time choked his utterance, and they continued to roll down his cheeks even for some time after he had begun his speech. He commenced by expressing, in the strongest terms, his love and affection for Mr. Burke, which had begun with his boyhood, and remained unbroken for five-and-twenty years; but by degrees the subject of their present division again rushed upon his mind, and, although he called him his right honourable friend, yet it was evident to all that their friendship was at an end. A meeting of the Whigs was held to consider this great schism which had broken out in their party, and the following resolution appeared in their official journal, the Morning Chronicle, on the subject: "The great and firm body of the Whigs of England, true to their principles, have decided on the dispute between Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke; and the former is declared to have maintained the pure doctrines by which they are bound together, and upon which they have invariably acted. The consequence is, that Mr. Burke retires from Parliament." Mr. Burke, in alluding to this resolution, said, on the same night, that he knew he was excommunicated by one party and that he was too old to seek another (2); and though in his age he had been so unfortunate as to meet this disgrace, yet he disdained to make any recantation, and

(1) Parl. Deb. xxix. 364, 366, 380, 388; and Burke's Speeches, iv, 3, 8, 9, 17, 23.

(2) Burke's Speeches, iv, 34, 38.

did not care to solicit the friendship of any man in the House, either on one side or the other.

Reflections on the event. Nothing can be imagined more characteristic of both these illustrious men, and of the views of the parties of which they severally were the heads, than the speeches now given. On the one side are to be seen warm affection, impassioned feeling, philanthropic ardour, vehemence of expression, worthy of the statesman who has been justly styled by no common man, "the most Demosthenian orator since the days of Demosthenes (1);" on the other, an ardent mind, a burning eloquence, a foresight chastened by observation of the past, benevolence restrained by anticipation of the future. In the ardour of the latter in support of the truths with which he was so deeply impressed, there is perhaps some reason to lament the undue asperity of indignant prophecy; in the former, too great stress laid upon political consistency under altered times. But time, the great test of truth, has now resolved the justice of the respective opinions thus eloquently advanced, and thrown its verdict, with decisive weight, into the scale with Mr. Burke. There is, perhaps; not to be found in the whole history of human anticipation, a more signal instance of erroneous views than were advanced by Mr. Fox, when he said, that the French constitution was the most stupendous fabric of wisdom ever reared in any age or country; that no danger was to be apprehended from the balance of power in Europe, now that France had obtained democratic institutions; and that, if it was subverted, no peril was to be apprehended to European liberty from the power or ambition of Russia. On the other hand, all must admit the extraordinary sagacity with which Mr. Burke not merely predicted the consequences to itself and to Europe, which necessarily would arise from the convulsions in France, but also pointed out so clearly that vital distinction between the Anglo-Saxon and the Gallic race on the shores of the St.-Lawrence, and the remarkable difference in their capacity to bear democratic institutions, which was destined not to produce its natural effects for half a century, and of which we are now only beginning to see the ultimate results.

State of Austria. Unwearied in perseverance, firm in purpose, unchangeable in ambition, the Austrian government was the most formidable rival with whom the French Republic had to anticipate a contest on the continent of Europe. This great empire, containing at that time nearly twenty-five millions of inhabitants, with a revenue of ninety million florins, numbered the richest and most fertile districts of Europe among its provinces. The manufacturing wealth of Flanders, the agricultural riches of Lombardy, added not less to the pecuniary resources, than the energetic valour of the Hungarians, and the impetuous zeal of the Tyrolese, to the military strength of the empire. The possession of the Low-Countries gave them an advanced post, formerly strongly fortified, immediately in contact with the French frontier; while the mountains of the Tyrol formed a vast fortress, garrisoned by an attached and warlike people, and placed at a salient angle between Germany and Italy, the certain theatre of future combats. Her armies, numerous and highly disciplined, had acquired immortal renown in the wars of Maria-Theresa, and maintained a creditable place, under Daun and Laudohn, in the scientific campaigns with the great Frederick. Her government, nominally a monarchy, but really an oligarchy, in the hands of the great nobles, possessed all that firmness and tenacity of purpose, by which aristocratic powers have always been distinguished; and which, under unparalleled difficulties and disasters,

has brought them at last successfully through the long struggle in which they were shortly after engaged (1).

Maria-Theresa was the soul of the Austrian monarchy; it was her heroic spirit, sage administration, and popular character, which brought its fortunes safe through the terrible crisis that occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century, and laid the foundation of its present grandeur and prosperity. At the accession of her son Joseph II in 1780, new maxims of government succeeded: the ancient spirit of the monarchy seemed about to expire. His mind was cultivated, his views benevolent, his habits simple: but these amiable qualities were combined with others of a more dangerous nature. An ardent reformer, a philanthropic philosopher, he was impatient to change every thing in the civil, religious, and military administration of his vast states; and in the warmth of his benevolence, urged on many reforms neither called for nor desired by his subjects. Endowed with an ardent and innovating temperament, he, at the same time, was animated by a desire for territorial acquisition and military glory. Strongly impressed with the inconvenience and expense attending the possession of the Low-Countries, so much exposed to France, so far removed from the hereditary states, and relying on the support of Catharine, Empress of Russia, in whose ambitious designs on Turkey he was participant, he was extremely desirous of incorporating Bavaria with his vast possessions, by giving the Elector the Low-Countries in exchange, with the title of King. Frederick of Prussia instantly sounded the alarm on this dangerous proposal, and, by his influence, a treaty was concluded at Berlin between Prussia, Saxony, and Hanover, which was the last act of that great man, and for the time caused this ambitious project on the part of Austria to miscarry. But the Imperial cabinet never lost sight of the design, and their attempts to carry it into execution during the course of the revolutionary war, became, as will appear in the sequel, the source of numberless calamities to themselves and to Europe (2).

The Austrian forces, at the commencement of the war, amounted to two hundred and forty thousand infantry, thirty-five thousand cavalry, and one hundred thousand artillery; but the extent and warlike spirit of their dominions furnished inexhaustible resources for the maintenance of the contest. Sincere and honest in principle, attached to old institutions, and powerfully swayed by religion, the inhabitants of her varied dominions were, with the exception of some of the Italian provinces, unanimous in their horror of the French republican principles; while the power and firm ascendant of the nobility gave steadiness and consistence to their efforts to oppose it. The cavalry was in the finest order, and performed splendid services during the course of the war; but the infantry, though well adapted for plain fighting in a good position, was incapable of the energetic movements which the new system of military operations required, and was disgraced by the frequent occurrence of large bodies laying down their arms. The provinces of Croatia, Transylvania, and the Bannat, lying on the frontier of Turkey, were organized in a military manner; all the inhabitants were trained to the use of arms, from whence the government derived inexhaustible supplies of irregular troops. Hungary and the Low-Countries formed the *élite* of the infantry, and composed the principal part of the Imperial guard. The cavalry, admirably mounted, were skilled in all the movements of war, and the artillery respectable, and in good equipment; but the officers of the infantry were deficient

(1) Hard, i. 33.

(2) Hard, i. 32, 36.

in military information, and the soldiers, though well disciplined, wanted the fire and vivacity of the French troops (1).

Austrian Netherlands. The Flemish dominions of Austria had recently been the theatre of a revolt so different from that of France, that it is difficult to conceive how they could both have arisen in countries so near each other in the same age of the world. The Emperor Joseph II had alienated the affections of these provinces, by the proposal to exchange them for Bavaria, a project which was only prevented from taking effect by the armed intervention of Prussia; and next excited their alarms by a variety of reforms, founded on philosophical principles, but totally unsuited to the character and degree of information possessed by the people. At length the proposal to give a colony of Genevese and Swiss, established near Ostend, the free exercise of their religion, brought matters to a crisis; the universities protested against the innovation, and he replied by abolishing the seignorial jurisdictions, and authorizing the sale of a great proportion of the estates of the monasteries, establishing schools independent of the clergy, and curtailing the privileges of the Estates, by introducing intendants, who almost superseded their authority. These changes excited an universal spirit of disaffection in the provinces, and led to a measure (2) the most extraordinary, and the most fatal, which modern history has to record.

Destruction of the barrier fortresses. The barrier towns of the Netherlands, extorted from France after so much bloodshed, or erected at so vast an expense, were demolished, and the level country left open and unprotected, to invite the invasion of their enterprising neighbours. It seemed as if the Emperor imagined that the marriage of his sister Marie-Antoinette had made the union between the two kingdoms perpetual; and that his whole danger arose from the discontented disposition of his own subjects. "Europe," says Jomini, "beheld with astonishment those celebrated fortresses, so famous in former wars, demolished by the very power which had constructed them; and the Flemings, proud of the recollections with which they were associated, sighed as they saw the plough razing the vestiges of so much historical glory. The event soon proved the fatal tendency of the measure. The Low-Countries, bereft of their fortresses, destitute of mountains, and too distant from the centre of the empire to be effectually defended, fell a prey to the first attack; and the Austrian government were first apprised of the ruinous tendency of their measures, by the loss of that ancient province of their empire (3)."

The discontents and ingratitude of the Flemings preyed so severely on the susceptible heart of Joseph II, that they shortened his life. Upon his death, which happened on 16th February, 1790, he was succeeded by his brother Leopold, whose paternal and benevolent system of government in Tuscany had long been the object of admiration to all the philosophers of Europe; but whose character, admirably adapted for the pacific administration of that tranquil duchy, was hardly calculated for the government of the great and varied provinces of the Austrian empire. He found the monarchy shaken in all its parts by the reforms and innovations of his predecessor; the Belgian provinces in a state of open insurrection; Bohemia and Lower-Austria in sullen discontent; and Hungary in a state of menacing insubordination. To complete his difficulties, the seeds of a revolution were rapidly expanding in Poland, while its distracted habits and feeble government afforded little hope that it would be permitted to extricate itself from its embarrassments without

(1) Hard. i. 33, 34. Jom. i. 235, 236.

(2) Hard. i. 89, 90. Lac. viii. 157, 159. Scott's Napoleon, i. 12, 13.

(3) Jom. i. 159.



foreign invasion; and it was easy to foresee that the spoliation of its rich and defenceless plains, would throw the apple of discord among the ambitious military monarchies by which it was surrounded (1).

Revolt of  
the Flem-  
ings  
against  
Austria.  
Sept. 1789.

The ill-humours of the Flemings soon broke out into open insurrection. In the autumn of 1789, at the very time that the French were revolting against the privileged classes and the authority of the church, the inhabitants of the Netherlands took up arms to support them. France sought to impose liberal measures upon its government; Flanders to resist those introduced by its sovereign; Brussels, Ghent, and Mons, speedily fell into the hands of the insurgents, and the rapidity of the disaster accelerated the death of the Emperor Joseph. But this success was of short duration. Leopold, his successor, took the most energetic measures to re-establish his authority; the partisans of the aristocracy in the revolted provinces came to blows with the adherents of the democracy; the French, indignant at the rejection of their principles by the aristocratic insurgents, refused their support (2); the march of Marshal Bender, at the head of the Imperialists, was a continual triumph; and the Austrian forces resumed possession of the whole of their Flemish dominions, with as much facility as they had lost them.

The House of Hapsburg was still in possession of the Imperial dignity; but the high-sounding titles and acknowledged supremacy of the Cæsars, could not conceal the real weakness of their authority. The vast but unwieldy fabric of the empire was governed by the diet assembled at Ratisbon, which consisted of three colleges; that of the electors, that of the princes, and that of the free towns. The first, which had been fixed by the treaty of Westphalia at eight electors, to which Hanover was afterwards added, possessed the sole right of electing the emperor; the second, composed of thirty-three ecclesiastical and sixty-one lay princes, enjoyed little influence, and afforded only an inviting prospect to the rapacity of their superiors; the third, consisting of forty-seven towns, was consulted only for form's sake, and had no real deliberative voice in public affairs. Each circle was bound to furnish a certain contingent of troops for the defence of the empire; but their soldiers, disunited and various, formed but a feeble protection, and the real strength of the empire consisted in the Austrian and Prussian monarchies (3).

Military  
state of  
Prussia.

The military strength of Prussia, raised to the highest pitch of which its resources would admit by the genius and successes of the Great Frederick, had rendered this inconsiderable kingdom a first-rate power on the continent of Europe. Its army, one hundred-and-sixty thousand strong, comprising thirty-five thousand horse, was in the highest state of discipline and equipment; but this force, how considerable soever, formed but a small part of the strength of the kingdom. By an admirable system of organization, the whole youth of the state was compelled to serve a limited number of years in the army in their early life, the effect of which was, not only that a taste for military habits was universally diffused, but that the state always possessed within its bosom an inexhaustible reserve of experienced veterans, who might, in any emergency, be called to its defence. The aversion evinced in so many other countries to the military service, from the unlimited length to which it extended, was unknown where it reached only to four years, and it came rather to be regarded as an agreeable mode of spending the active and enterprising period of youth. Prussia reaped the full benefit of this judicious

(1) Hard. i. 79, 80.

(2) Hard. i. 88, 90. Lac. viii. 164. Scott, i. 15, 20.

(3) Hard. i. 8, 9.

system; when she withstood the three greatest powers in Europe during the Seven Years' War; and she was indebted to the same cause for those inexhaustible and courageous defenders who flocked to her standard during the latter part of the revolutionary contest (1).

At the death of the Great Frederick, the Prussian army was considered as the first in Europe. Proud of a struggle without a parallel in modern times, and of the unrivalled talent of their commander, the Prussian soldiers possessed not only the moral strength so necessary in war, but had been trained, in a variety of exercises, to the rapid movement of great masses. Annual evolutions, on a large scale, accustomed the army to that necessary piece of instruction; and under the scientific auspices of Seidlitz, the cavalry had become the most perfect in Europe. In great schools at Berlin, and other places, the young officers were taught the military art; and there, as elsewhere in the northern monarchies of Europe, the whole youth of any consideration were destined for the profession of arms. The higher situations in the army, however, were reserved for the nobles; but, by degrees, that invidious restriction was abandoned, and in the arduous struggle of 1813, Prussia had reason to felicitate herself upon the change (2).

The states which composed the Prussian monarchy were by no means so coherent or rounded as those which formed the Austrian dominions. Nature had traced out no limits like the Rhine, the Alps, or the Pyrenees, to form the boundary of its dominions; no great rivers or mountain chains protected its frontiers; few fortified towns guarded it from the incursions of the vast military monarchies with which it was surrounded. Its surface consisted of fourteen thousand square leagues, and its population, which had been nearly doubled under the reign of Frederick the Great, amounted to nearly eight million souls, but they were composed of various races, spoke different languages, and professed different religions, and were protected by no external or internal line of fortresses. Towards Russia and Austrian Poland, a frontier of two hundred leagues was totally destitute of places of defence: Silesia alone enjoyed the double advantage of three lines of fortresses, and the choicest gifts of nature. The national defence rested entirely on the army and the courage of the inhabitants: but, animated by the recollection of the Seven Years' War, they were both elevated to the highest pitch (3).

The government was a military despotism: no privileges of individuals or corporations restrained the authority of the sovereign; the liberty of the press was unknown: but nevertheless the public administration was tempered by the wisdom and beneficence of its state policy. This system, begun by Frederick the Great, had passed into settled maxims, which governed the administration of his successors. In no country of Europe, not even in England or Switzerland, was private right more thoroughly respected, or justice more rigidly observed, both in the courts of law and the domestic measures of government. "Every thing for the people, nothing by them," was the principle of its administration. Toleration, established even to excess, had degenerated into its fatal ally, indifference and infidelity, in many of the higher orders: manners, imitating the seductions of Paris, were corrupt in the capital; while the middling ranks, united in secret societies of Freemasonry, already indulged those ardent feelings which afterwards exercised so important an influence on the destinies of Europe (4).

(1) Jom. i. 231, 232. Hard. i. 37.

(2) Jom. i. 228, 231.

(3) Hard. i. 37, 39.

(4) Hard. i. 40, 44.

Russia.

The might of Russia, first experienced by Frederick at the terrible battle of Cunnnersdorff, was now beginning to fill the north with apprehension. This immense empire, comprehending nearly half of Europe and Asia within its dominions, backed by inaccessible frozen regions, secured from invasion by the extent of its surface and the severity of its climate, inhabited by a patient and indomitable race, ever ready to exchange the luxuries and adventure of the south for the hardships and monotony of the north, was daily becoming more formidable to the liberties of Europe. The Empress Catherine, endowed with masculine energy and ambition, was urging a bloody war with Turkey, in which the zeal of a religious crusade was directed by the sagacity of civilized warfare. The campaign had commenced with the taking of Oczakoff, which easily yielded to the audacity and fortune of Prince Potemkin; but the courage of the Turks, though long dormant, was at length roused to the highest pitch. Undisciplined and unstable in the field, they were almost invincible behind walls, and the most inconsiderable forts, manned by such defenders, became impregnable save at an enormous expense of blood and treasure. But a new and terrible enemy to the Ottomans arose in SUWARROW, one of those extraordinary men, who sometimes, by the force of their individual character, alter the destiny of nations. This determined and dauntless general, who possessed a religious influence over the minds of his soldiers, joined the Austrians with eight thousand men, as they were maintaining a doubtful contest with fifty thousand troops on the banks of the river Rymniski, and infused such energy into the combined army, that they gained a complete victory over a superior body of Turks. He was afterwards employed in the siege of Ismael, and, chiefly by his fanatical ascendancy over the minds of his soldiers, succeeded in carrying by assault that celebrated fortress, though defended by twenty-four thousand of the bravest troops in the Turkish dominions. British diplomacy was employed before it was too late to avert the threatened calamities of the Ottoman empire; new objects of contention arose; fresh contests sprang out of the Western Revolution, and the glory of placing the cross on the dome of St.-Sophia was reserved for a future age (1).

The Russian  
army.

The Russian infantry had long been celebrated for its immovable firmness. At Pultawa, Cunnnersdorff, Choczim, and Ismael, it had become distinguished; and the cavalry, though greatly inferior to its present state of discipline and equipment, was inured to service in the war with the Turks, and mounted on a hardy and admirable race of horses. The artillery, now so splendid, was then remarkable only for the cumbrous quality of the carriages, and the obstinate valour of the men. The armies were recruited by a certain proportion of conscripts drawn out of every one hundred male inhabitants; a mode of conscription which, in an immense and rapidly increasing population, furnished an inexhaustible supply of soldiers. They amounted, in 1792, to two hundred thousand men, but the half of this force alone was disposable for active operations, the remainder being cantoned on the Pruth, the Caucasus, and the frontiers of Finland. In this enumeration, however, was not comprised either the youth of the military colonies, who afterwards became of great importance, or the well-known Cossacks of the Don. This irregular force, composed of the pastoral tribes in the southern provinces of the empire, costs almost nothing to the state; the government merely issues an order for a certain number of this hardy band to take the field, and crowds of active young men appear,

The Cos-  
sacks.

(1) Lac. viii. 155, 156. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 201, Tooke's Russia, i. 128, Ségur, ii. 279.

equipped at their own expense, mounted on small but indefatigable horses, and ready to undergo all the hardships of war, from their duty to their sovereign, and their hopes of plunder or adventure. Gifted with all the individual intelligence which belongs to the pastoral and savage character, and yet subjected to a certain degree of military discipline, they make the best of all light troops, and are more formidable to a retreating army than the *élite* of the French or Russian guards (1).

Inured to hardships from his infancy, the Russian soldier is better calculated to bear the fatigues of war than any in Europe. He knows no duty so sacred as obedience to his officers; submissive to his discipline as to the ordinances of religion, no fatigue, no privation, makes him forget its obligations. Through every march, through entire campaigns, you behold the cannoneer near his piece, at the post assigned to him by his commander; and, unless authorized to do so, nothing will induce him to abandon it. The waggon-train wax their harness in bivouacs, under a cold of 15 deg. of Reaumur, as they would do for a day of parade in the finest weather. This admirable spirit of precision renders their defeats extremely rare; and the soldiers are so accustomed, in their wars with the Turks, to look for safety only in closing their ranks, and to expect destruction if they fly, that they are hardly ever broken. If they have not the facility at rallying after a defeat, which their high degree of individual intelligence has given to the French soldiers, they have greater firmness in resisting it (2).

The whole energies of the nation are turned towards the army. Commerce, the law, and all civil employments, are held in no esteem; all the youth of any consideration betake themselves to the profession of arms. Immense military schools, in different parts of the empire, annually send forth the whole flower of the population to this dazzling career. Precedence depends entirely on military rank; and the heirs to the greatest families are compelled to enter the army in the lowest grade. They face hardship and danger with the same courage as the private soldiers; they were to be found by their sides in the breach of Ismael and in the snows of Finland. Promotion is open equally to all (3): a government depending entirely on its military prowess, finds itself obliged to promote real merit; and the greater part of the officers at the head of the army have risen from the inferior stations of society.

But, formidable as the power of Russia appeared even at that period, the world was far from anticipating the splendid part which it was destined to bear in the approaching conflict. Her immense population, amounting in Europe alone to nearly thirty-five millions (4), afforded an inexhaustible supply of men. The ravages of war, or pestilence, were speedily filled up in a country whose numbers were doubling every forty years. Her soldiers, inured to heat and cold from their infancy, and actuated by a blind devotion to the Czar, united the steady valour of the English to the impetuous energy of the French troops. Dreaded by all her neighbours, and too remote to fear attack, she could afford to send forth her whole disposable force on foreign service; while the want of pecuniary resources was of little importance, as long as the wealth of England could be relied on to furnish the sinews of war. Before the conclusion of hostilities, France saw one hundred and fifty thousand Russian soldiers reviewed on the plains of Burgundy; a force greater than that with which Attila combated on the field of Châlons.

Poland.

Poland, the destined theatre of glorious achievements, was, at the commencement of the French Revolution, groaning under the weight of

(1) Jom. i. 254, 258.

(2) Jom. i. 256.

(3) Jom. i. 257.

(4) Tooke's Russia, ii. 139.

foreign oppression. This heroic country, long the bulwark of Christendom against the Turks, the deliverer of Germany, under John Sobieski, the ancient conqueror of Russia, had been the victim of an atrocious conspiracy in 1772. The flatness of its surface, the want of fortified towns, and the weakness incident to an elective monarchy and turbulent democracy, had rendered all the valour of the people unavailing, and the greater part of its dominions had been reft by its ambitious neighbours at that disastrous epoch. In 1792, the neighbouring sovereigns found a new pretence for renewing their spoliations. Stanislaus-Augustus, the last nominal sovereign, had granted a constitution to his subjects, better adapted than could have been hoped for to their peculiar situation. By it, the crown was declared elective, but the dynasty hereditary—the Princess of Saxony was proclaimed heiress of the throne after the demise of the King. Legislative measures and decrees were to be proposed by the crown, and sanctioned by the Chambers of Lords and Commons. The nobles abandoned their privilege of engrossing every employment under government; and, to provide for the gradual elevation of the people, the King was obliged, during the sitting of each diet, to ennoble thirty of the bourgeois class. The Catholic religion was declared the established faith. This constitution was proclaimed amidst the universal acclamations of the people; and new life thought to have been infused into the ancient monarchy, from the intermixture of popular vigour. But these transports were of short duration. Stanislaus-Augustus, how enlightened soever in framing a constitution, was ill qualified to defend it. The jealousy of the Empress Catherine was awakened by the prospect of Poland again emerging into political vigour, and her fears by the proximity of revolutionary principles to her hereditary states. A new treaty of partition was signed between the three adjoining powers (1), and the conqueror of Ismael called from the Turkish war, to give the last blow to the ancient defenders of the Christian faith.

Though deprived of the weight arising from unity of empire, the native valour of the Poles destined them to perform an important part on the theatre of Europe. Napoléon has characterised them as the people who most rapidly become soldiers; and their ardent patriotism rendered them the ready victims of any power, which held out the prospect of restoring their national independence. The valour of the Polish legions made them distinguished in the wars of Italy and Spain: they followed the French standards to Smolensko and Moscow, and maintained an unshaken fidelity to them during all the disasters of the subsequent retreat. Though cruelly abandoned by Napoléon in the commencement of the Russian campaign, they adhered to his fortunes through all the subsequent changes; and amidst the general defection of Europe, kept their faith inviolate on the field of Leipsic.

**Sweden.** Sweden was too remote from the scene of European conflict to have much weight in the political scale. Secure in a distant, and almost inaccessible situation, blessed with a hardy, virtuous and enlightened peasantry, she had nothing to dread but from the insatiable progress of Russian ambition. She had recently, however, concluded a glorious war with her powerful neighbour; her arms, in alliance with those of Turkey, had taken the Imperial forces by surprise; and Gustavus, extricating himself by a desperate exertion of valour from a perilous situation, had destroyed the Russian fleet, and gained a great victory so near St.-Petersburg, that the sound of the cannon was heard in the palace of the Empress. But such is the weight of Russia, that her enemies are always glad to purchase peace, even in the moments of their

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 205. Lac, viii. 169, 172. Burke, vi. 178.

greatest success. Catherine hastened to get quit of the Swedish war, by offering advantageous terms to her courageous rival, and flattered his chivalrous feelings into accepting them, by representing that the efforts of all sovereigns should now be directed towards resisting the progress of the French Revolution, and that he alone was worthy to head the enterprise (1).

Ottoman dominions. Placed on the other extremity of the Russian dominions, the forces of Turkey were still less capable of affecting the balance of the European states. Formidable during the period of its vigour and rise, the Ottoman power, like that of all barbarous nations, had rapidly and irrecoverably declined, after the zenith of its greatness had been attained. It was defended chiefly by the desert and inaccessible nature of its territory, the consequence of the incessant and grievous oppression of its government, and the jealousies of the European powers, who never failed to interfere when the danger became imminent to the existence of its dominion. Its cavalry, brave, skilful, and admirably mounted, was the most formidable in the world (2); but the desultory temper of its people was incapable of the submission and constancy requisite to form an experienced and disciplined body of infantry. Sometimes, however, the spirit of fanaticism roused them to extraordinary exertions, and on such occasions it was not unusual to see a hundred and fifty thousand armed men on the banks of the Danube; but these efforts were of short duration; and the first serious reverse dissipated the mighty host, and reduced its leaders to the command of a few regiments of horse. But though these causes rendered the Ottomans incapable of foreign conquest, they were still extremely formidable to an invading army; their desert and waterless plains afforded no resources to an enemy, while the total want of roads fit for the transport of wheeled carriages, made it almost impossible to bring supplies from the adjoining states, or advance the artillery requisite for the siege of their fortresses. Behind the walls of the most considerable towns, the Janizaries fought with desperate, and often successful valour; the whole inhabitants took to arms in defence of their lives and their religion; and, lined with such defenders, trifling cities frequently presented a more formidable resistance than the most regular fortifications of Western Europe.

The incessant and grinding oppression, however, of the Ottoman government, had implanted a principle of weakness in the Turkish power, little attended to in former times, but of which the effects have since been strikingly displayed. This consisted in the constant and rapid decay of the population, which soon rendered her unequal even to those sudden and vehement exertions, which at former periods had struck such terror into the neighbouring states (3). At the same time the ignorant and brutal pride of the government, which prevented them from acquiring any knowledge of the situation of the European powers, rendered them incapable of availing themselves of the advantages which their desperate struggles frequently afforded, and on more than one occasion made them throw away the only remaining chance of recovering their lost ground from the unceasing hostility of Russia.

Italy. From a different cause, the political importance of Italy had sunk as low as that of the Turkish states. Inhabiting the finest country in Europe, blessed with the richest plains and the most fruitful mountains, defended from invasion by the encircling sea and the frozen Alps, venerable from the recollections of ancient greatness, and containing the cradle of modern freedom, the people of Italy were yet as dust in the scale of nations. The loss

(1) *Lac.* viii. 167.

(2) *Nap.* i. 375.

(3) *Walsh's Constantinople*, i. 193, 194. *Backingham's Mesopotamia*, i. 212.

of military courage and of private virtue seems to have been the cause of this sad degradation. When conducted by foreign leaders, the inhabitants of its northern states, like the Portuguese and the Hindoos under British direction, have risen to honourable distinction beneath the standard of Napoléon; but led by their own officers, and following their national colours, they have never been able to stand the shock of the Transalpine forces. Tuscany, from the effects of the sage and paternal government of Leopold, was flourishing, prosperous, and contented; but the proximity of France had spread the seeds of discontent in Piedmont, and, in common with its inhabitants, the Milanese beheld with undisguised satisfaction the triumph of the republican arms on the other side of the Alps. It was in vain, however, that a smothered feeling of indignation at foreign rule pervaded the Italian states; in vain all their theatres rung with acclamations at the line of Alfieri:

“*Servi siam sì! ma servi ognor frementì.*”

They were incapable of those steady and sustained efforts, which are essential to the establishment either of civil liberty or national independence; hence, during all the contests of which it was the theatre, Italy became the unresisting prey of the northern victor. The Austrian and French eagles alternately ruled her plains, but the national colours were never unfurled, nor any effort made to liberate them from foreign dominion; and on the few occasions on which the Neapolitans and Venetians attempted to raise the standard of independence, they were vanquished by the mere sight of the enemy's force. It is melancholy to reflect, that the descendants of the Romans, the Samnites, and the Cisalpine Gauls, should so far, and to appearance so irrecoverably, have degenerated from the virtue of their ancestors; but it seems to be the law of nature, that a high state of civilisation cannot *long* co-exist with military courage in the favoured climates of the world; and that, as some counterpoise to the lavish accumulation of her gifts, Nature has denied to their inhabitants the permanent resolution to defend them (1).

**Piedmont.** The kingdom of Piedmont, situated on the frontier of Italy, partook more of the character of its northern than its southern neighbours. Its soldiers, chiefly drawn from the mountains of Savoy, Liguria, or the maritime Alps, were brave, docile, and enterprising, and, under Victor-Amadeus, had risen to the highest distinction in the commencement of the eighteenth century. The regular army amounted to thirty thousand infantry and three thousand five hundred cavalry; but, besides this, the government could summon to their support fifteen thousand militia, who, in defending their mountain passes, rivalled the best troops in Europe. They were chiefly employed during the war in guarding the fortresses, and the number of these, joined to the natural strength of the country, and its important situation, as holding the keys of the great passes over the Alps, gave this state a degree of military importance beyond what could have been anticipated from its physical strength (2).

**Holland.** Sunk in obscure marshes, crushed by the naval supremacy of England, and cooped up in a corner of Europe, the political importance of the Dutch Republic had fallen in a great degree in the scale of Europe. Its army was still composed of forty-four thousand men, and its fortified towns and inundations gave it the same means of defence which had formerly been so gloriously exerted; but the resolution of the inhabitants was by no means at that time equal to the strength of their situation. A long tract of peace had

(1) Bot. i. 21. Lac. viii. 147.

(2) Jom. i. 244.

weakened the military spirit of the people, and their chief defence was placed in the wretched assistance of auxiliary troops, which never enabled the Republic, during the subsequent contests, to bring thirty thousand men into the field. The world at this period was far from anticipating the glorious stand which the Dutch subsequently made against the hostility by land and sea of the two greatest powers in Europe (1).

**Spain.** Animated by stronger passions, descended from more fiery progenitors, and inured to a more varied climate, the people of the Spanish Peninsula were calculated to perform a more distinguished part in the strife for European freedom. This singular and mixed race, united to the tenacity of purpose which distinguished the Gothic, the fiery enterprise which characterised the Moorish blood; centuries of almost unbroken repose had neither extinguished the one nor abated the other; and the Conqueror of Europe erroneously judged the temper of her people, when he measured it by the inglorious reigns of the Bourbon dynasty. The nobles, degenerated by long-continued intermarriage with each other, were indeed incapable of strenuous exertion, and the reigning family had none of the qualities calculated to command success; but the peasantry, bold, prosperous, and independent, presented the materials for a resolute army; and the priesthood, possessed of an unlimited sway over the minds of the lower orders, were animated by the most inextinguishable hatred at the principles of the French Revolution. The decay of its national strength, falsely ascribed by superficial writers to the drain of colonial enterprise, and the possession of the mines of America, was really owing to the accumulation of estates in the hands of communities and noble families, and the predominant influence of the Catholic priesthood, which for centuries had rendered that fine kingdom little else than a cluster of convents, surrounded by a hardy peasantry. But though these causes had rendered Spain incapable of any sustained foreign enterprise, they had not in the least diminished its aptitude for internal defence; and the people, who in every age have there made common cause with the king and the nobles, flew to arms with unequalled enthusiasm, when their loyalty was awakened by the captivity of their sovereign, and their fanaticism roused by the efforts of their pastors. By a just retribution, the first great reverse of the French arms was occasioned by the spirit of religious resistance nourished by their first flagrant acts of injustice; and the disaster of Baylen would not have arisen, nor the bones of five hundred thousand French whitened the plains of Spain, but for the confiscation of the French church by the Constituent Assembly (2).

The nominal military strength of Spain, at the commencement of the Revolution, was one hundred and forty thousand men; but this force was far from being effective, and in the first campaigns they were never able to raise their force in the field to eighty thousand combatants, though they reinforced their army by thirty-six battalions on the breaking out of the war. But on occasion of the invasion in 1808, an immense insurrectionary force sprung up in every part of the country. These undisciplined levies, however, though occasionally brave, like the Turks, in defending walls, were miserably deficient in the essential qualities of regular soldiers; they had neither the steadiness, mutual confidence, nor conduct, necessary for success in the field. Accordingly, they were almost invariably routed in every encounter; and but for the tenacity of purpose arising from their character, ignorance, and habit of boasting, which effectually concealed the extent of

(1) Jom. i. 246.

(2) Foy, ii. 143, 144, 151, 160, 170. Jomell, 171. Napier, i. 4, 5.



their disasters from all but the sufferers under them, and the continued presence of a large English force in the field, the war would have been terminated soon after its commencement, with very little trouble to the French Emperor (1).

The Spanish soldiers have never exhibited in the wars of the Revolution that firmness in the field, which formerly distinguished their infantry at Pavia, Rocroi, and in the Low-Countries. They have been distinguished rather by the tumultuary habits and tendency to abandon their colours on the first reverse, which belongs to the troops of tropical climates, and characterised their forefathers in the Roman wars. It would seem as if the long residence of their ancestors in a warm climate had melted away the indomitable valour of the Gothic race in their original frozen seats. Military glory was held in little esteem; hardly four of the *grandeės* were to be found, in 1792, in the army or naval service. But the peasantry have evinced throughout the war the most obstinate and enduring spirit: Though routed on numberless occasions, they almost always rallied, as in the days of Sertorius, in more favourable circumstances (2); and though deserted by nearly all the nobility, maintained a prolonged contest with the Conqueror of northern Europe.

Switzerland. Cradled in snowy mountains, tilling a sterile soil, and habituated to severe habits, the Swiss peasantry exhibited the same features which have always rendered them so celebrated in European wars. Their lives were as simple, their courage as undaunted, their patriotism as warm, as those of their ancestors who died on the field of Morat and Morgarten. Formidable in defence, however, their numerical strength, which did not exceed thirty-eight thousand regular soldiers (3), rendered them of little avail in the great contests which rolled round the feet of their mountains. Occasions, indeed, were not wanting, when they displayed the ancient virtue of their race: Their conflicts in Berne and Underwalden, at the time of the French invasion, equalled the far-famed celebrity of their wars of independence; and, amidst the disgraceful defection of the 10th August, the Swiss guards alone remained faithful to the fortunes of Louis, and merited, by their death, the touching inscription on the graves at Thermopylæ:

“Go, stranger! and at Lacedæmon tell,  
That here, obedient to her laws, we fell.”

Forces of  
France.

The forces of France, destined to contend with and long triumph over this immense aggregate of military strength, were far from being considerable at the commencement of the struggle. The infantry consisted of one hundred and sixty thousand men, the cavalry of thirty-five thousand, the artillery of ten thousand; but a great proportion of these forces had left their colours during the agitated state of the country, prior to the breaking out of the war. During the stormy period of the Revolution, the discipline of the troops had sensibly declined (4), and the custom of judging for themselves on political questions, had introduced a degree of license inconsistent with the habits of military discipline; but all these defects were more than counterbalanced by the number of able men who speedily entered the ranks from the *Tiers-État*, and, by their vigour and audacity, first supplied the want of military experience, and soon after induced it.

The cavalry, consisting of fifty-nine regiments, brave, enthusiastic, and

(1) Napier, i. 237, *et seq.* Jom. i. 240.

(2) Jom. i. 242, 243.

(3) *Statistique de la Suisse*, 102.

(4) Jom. i. 224. Carnot's *Memoirs*, 136. St.-Cyr, *Introd.* i. 36.

impetuous, were at first deficient in steadiness and organization; but these defects were speedily supplied under the pressure of necessity, and by the talent which emerged from the lower classes of society. The artillery and engineers, which were not exclusively confined, under the old *régime*, to men of family, from the first were superior in intelligence and capacity to any in Europe, and contributed more than any other arm to the early successes of the Republican forces. The staff was miserably deficient; but the materials of the finest *état-major* existed in France, and the ascendant of genius, in a career open to all, soon brought an unparalleled accession of talent to that important department. But the chief strength of the army consisted in two hundred battalions of volunteers, raised by a decree of the Constituent Assembly; and who, although not fully completed, and imperfectly instructed in military exercises, were animated with the highest spirit, and in the greatest state both of mental and physical activity. In both these respects they were greatly superior to the old regiments, which were not only paralysed by the divisions and insubordination consequent on the Revolution, but weakened by the habits of idleness and vice which they had contracted during a long residence in barracks (1).

It is a mistake, however, to imagine that the military force of France at this period was inconsiderable, or that the independence of France was preserved, on the invasion in 1792, merely by the revolutionary levies. Napoléon's authority is decisive to the contrary. "It was neither," says he, "the volunteers nor the recruits who saved the Republic: it was the one hundred and eighty thousand old troops of the monarchy and the discharged veterans whom the Revolution impelled to the frontiers. Part of the recruits deserted, part died, a small portion only remained, who in process of time formed good soldiers. You will not soon find one going to war with an army of recruits (2)."

State of society over Europe at this epoch.

Such was the state of the principal European powers at the commencement of the French Revolution. A spirit of gentleness pervaded the political world, the effect of increasing knowledge, and long-continued prosperity. Even the most despotic empires were ruled with a lenity unknown in former times, and the state-prisons of all the European monarchies would probably have exhibited as few inmates as the Bastille when it was stormed in 1789. Ever since the termination of the general war in 1763, a growing spirit of improvement had pervaded the European states, and repeatedly called forth the praises of the contemporary annalists. Agriculture had risen into universal esteem; kings were setting the example of cultivating the soil; and a large portion of the nobility were every where lending their aid to improve that first and best of human pursuits. Leopold in Tuscany and Flanders, and Louis in France, were ardently engaged in the amelioration of their dominions; even in the regions of the North, the spirit of improvement was steadily advancing. The able exertions of Frederick had nearly doubled in a single reign the resources of his dominions; and in Poland and Russia, the example of a gradual enfranchisement of the serfs had been set with the happiest success. The haughtiness and pride of aristocratic birth was gradually yielding to the influence of extending wants and an enlarged commerce, and in many of the European states the highest offices under government were held by persons of plebeian birth. Necker, Vergennes, and Sartines, who successively held the most important situations in France, were of this class. The Inquisition had been

(1) Jom. i. 226. St.-Cyr, i. 38. Hard, i.

(2) Thib. Cons. 109.

voluntarily abandoned in Parma, Placentia, Milan, and Modena, and toleration over all Europe had spread to a degree unknown in former times. All the remaining vestiges of that fierce spirit, which sullied with barbarism the lofty and romantic courtesy of ancient manners, were gradually softening away; and the flames of that religious zeal, which for two centuries had so often kindled the torch of civil discord, were sunk into ashes. Every succeeding generation was of a character milder and gentler than the last. There was a diffusion of liberality that was beginning to pervade the mass of mankind. The diversified classes of society harmonized with each other in a way hitherto unknown; and whatever might be the peculiarities of particular constitutions, a sweeter blood seemed in all to circulate through every member of the political body. The lowest of the people, under governments the most despotic, no longer held their countenances prone to the earth, but were taught to erect them, with a becoming sense of their own nature; and the brow of authority, instead of an austere frown, wore a more inviting air of complacency and amenity (1).

But, while such was the general character of Europe, there was an essential distinction between the national tendency of its Northern and Southern states, which soon produced the most important effects on their respective fortunes: The spirit of the South was essentially pacific, that of the North ambitious; the repose of the former bordered on inertness, the energy of the latter on turbulence. The amelioration of the first was slow and almost imperceptible, flowing chiefly from the benignity of the sovereigns; the improvements of the latter rapid and violent, taking their origin in the increasing importance of the people. Pleasure was the leading object in the South, glory, military glory, in the North. The difference was perceptible even during the progress of pacific changes; but when war broke out, its effects became of the last importance, and speedily led to the subjugation of the Southern by the Northern states of Europe (2).

The greatest blessings border upon misfortunes; out of the bosom of calamity often springs the chief improvement of the human race. To the eye of philosophy it was not difficult to discern that the growing passion for innovation, to which all reform is more or less related, was pregnant with political danger; and that the disposition to improve, emanating from the purest intention in the higher ranks, was likely to agitate the spirit of democracy in the lower. Such a peril, accordingly, was foreseen and expressed by the contemporary historians (3); but they did not foresee, nor could human imagination have anticipated, either the terrible effects of that spirit upon the passing generation, or the beneficial effects which the storm of the world was destined to have upon the future condition of mankind.

The state of France, at the period when hostilities first commenced, cannot be better described than in the words of the eloquent and philanthropic Abbé Raynal, in a letter to the National Assembly: "Placed on the verge of the grave, on the point of quitting an immense family, of which I have never ceased to wish the happiness, what do I behold around me in this capital? Religious troubles, civil dissension, the consternation of some, the audacity of others, a government the slave of popular tyranny, the sanctuary of the laws violated by lawless men; soldiers without discipline, chiefs without authority, ministers without resources; a king, the first and best friend of his people, deprived of all power, outraged, menaced,

(1) Lac. viii. 140. Bat. i. 13, 19. Ann. Reg. xxiii. 207, 211; xxiv. 12, 13; xxvii. 3, 4; xxviii. 169.

(2) Lac. viii. 141.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxviii. 29, 30.

a prisoner in his own palace, and the sovereign power transferred to popular clubs, where ignorant and brutal men take upon themselves to decide every political question. Such is the real state of France; few but myself would have the courage to declare it, but I do so, because I feel it to be my duty; because I am bordering on my eightieth year; because no one can accuse me of being a partisan of the ancient *régime*; because, while I groan over the desolation of the French church, no one can assert that I am a fanatical priest; because, while I regard as the sole means of salvation the re-establishment of the legitimate authority, no one can suppose that I am insensible to the blessings of real freedom (1)." When such was the language of the first supporters of the Revolution, it is noways surprising that the European powers beheld with dismay the progress of principles fraught with such calamitous consequences, according to the admission of their own partisans, in the countries where they had commenced.

Menacing language of the French to other states The language of the French government towards the people of all other states was such as to excite the most serious apprehension of the friends of order in every civilized country. Not only the orators in the clubs, but the members of the Assembly, openly proclaimed the doctrine of fraternization with the revolutionary party all over the world. The annexation of the states of Avignon, and the Venaissin, was early marked by Mr. Burke as the indication of an ambitious spirit, which ere long the limits of Europe would not contain.

Sept. 17, 1791. The annexation of this little state to the French Republic was the more remarkable that it was the first decided aggression on the part of its rulers upon the adjoining nations, and that it was committed on an independent sovereign with whom not even the pretence of a quarrel existed, and who was not alleged to have entered into any hostile alliances against that power. This was followed up in the same year by the seizure of Porentrui, part of the dominions of the Bishop of Bâle (2).

The French Revolution surprised the European powers in their usual state of smothered jealousy or open hostility with each other. Catherine of Russia was occupied with her ambitious projects in the south-east of Europe, and her ascendancy at the Courts of Berlin and Vienna was so great that no serious opposition was to be apprehended from their hostility. France had 28th Sept. 1786. shortly before signed a commercial treaty with Great-Britain, which was considered as indicating the ascendancy of her great naval rival, and seriously impaired her influence on the continent of Europe; while Frederick the Great had recently before his death concluded the Convention of Berlin, for the protection of Bavaria and the lesser powers from the ambition of the House of Austria. But the death of that great monarch, 17th Aug. 1786. which took place in August 1786, was an irreparable loss to the diplomacy of Europe at the very time when, from the commencement of new and unheard-of dangers, his sagacity was most required.

His successor, Frederick-William, though distinguished for personal valour, and not destitute of penetration and good sense, was too indolent and voluptuous to be qualified to follow out the active thread of negotiation which his predecessor had held. Hertzberg became, after the death of the late monarch, the soul of the Prussian cabinet, and his whole object was to provide a counterpoise to the enormous preponderance of the two Imperial courts, which had recently become still more formidable from the intimate union which prevailed between Catherine and Joseph II, cemented by their common

(1) Lac. viii. 355, 356.

(2) Parl. Hist. xxxiv. 1316. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 199, 206; xxxiv. 39.

ambitious designs on Turkey, and which had been ostentatiously proclaimed to Europe during a voyage which the two potentates made together on the Volga to the Crimea and shores of the Black-Sea. A treaty with France promised no satisfactory result in the distracted state to which that kingdom was now reduced. In these circumstances, an alliance of Great-Britain, Prussia, and Holland, appeared the only means of providing for the balance of power

in Europe, and, under the influence of Mr. Pitt, a convention was concluded at Loo between these three powers, which again established the preponderance of England on the continent, and long preserved the balance of European power (1). Thus, at the very time that the most appalling dangers were about to arise to the liberties of Europe from the revolutionary ambition of France on its western side, the views of its statesmen were turned to another quarter, and solely directed to prevent the aggrandizement of the military monarchies, who seemed on the point of swallowing up its eastern dynasties (2).

Passionately desirous of military renown, Joseph II addressed, early in 1788, a confidential letter to Frederick-William, in which he openly avowed his designs on Turkey, and justified them by the practice of the Turks themselves and all the European powers in similar circumstances (3). Though flattered by this mark of confidence, the Prussian cabinet were not blinded to the danger which menaced Europe from the approaching dismemberment of Turkey, so rapidly following the second partition of Poland. Mean-while the progress of the Muscovite and Imperial arms was daily more alarming; the throne of Constantinople seemed shaken to its foundation. Oczakow had fallen, and with it the bravest defenders of the Turkish power; the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg and Suwarrow successively defeated vast bodies of Osmanlis at Fochzani and Martinesti, while Belgrade, the bulwark of Transylvania, yielded to the scientific measures of Marshal Laudohn: the Russians, on the shores of the Black-Sea, had completely routed Hassan Pacha at Tobak, and after a long siege, made themselves masters of Bender, while the Imperialists, no less successful, reduced Bucharest, and spread themselves over all the northern shores of the Danube. Orsova had fallen; and the united Imperial armies, two hundred and fifty thousand strong, extending over a line four hundred miles in length, already, in the spring of 1790, menaced Gergevo and Widin, and threatened instantaneous destruction to the Ottoman empire (4).

Seriously alarmed at the dangers which evidently menaced Europe from the fall of the Turkish empire, Mr. Pitt was indefatigable in his exertions, before it was too late, to arrest the march of the Imperial courts. By his means the hands were drawn closer between Prussia and Great-Britain, and Frederick-William, fully alive to the dangers which threatened his dominions from the aggrandizement of Austria, advanced, at the head of one hundred thousand men, to the frontiers of Bohemia. Unable to undertake a war at the same time on the Elbe and the Danube, and uneasy, both on account of

(1) Marten's Trait. v. 172.

(2) Hard. i. 62, 63.

(3) "The Sword is drawn," said he, "and it shall not be restored to the scabbard till I have regained all that has been wrested by the Osmanlis from my house. My enterprise against Turkey has no other object but to regain the possessions which time and misfortunes have detached from my crown. The Turks consider it as an invariable maxim to seize the first convenient opportunity of regaining the possessions which they have lost. The House of Brandenburg has risen to its present pitch of glory by adopting the same principles. Your uncle

wrested Silesia from my mother at a moment when, surrounded by enemies, she had no other support but her native grandeur of mind and the love of her people. During a century of losses, Austria has made no proportional acquisition; for the larger portion of Poland, on the last partition, fell to Prussia. I hope these reasons will appear sufficient for me to decline the intervention of your Majesty; and that you will not resist my endeavours to Germanize some hundreds of thousands of Orientals."

—HARD. i. 65, 66.

(4) Ann. Reg. xxxi. 182, 200; and xxxiii. i. 18. Hard. i. 68, 84.

the menacing aspect of France and the insurrection in Flanders, Austria paused in the career of conquest. Conferences were opened at Reichenbach, midway between the head-quarters of the Prussian and Imperial armies; and, 27th July, 1790. after some delay, preliminaries were signed, which concluded the differences between the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin, and opened the way to the accommodation of the former with the Porte. The Prussian army immediately retired: thirty thousand Austrians, under Marshal Bender, moved towards the Low-Countries, and speedily reduced its discontented provinces to submission; while a truce was shortly after concluded for nine months between the Turks and Imperialists, which was followed by conferences at Sistow (1), and at length a definitive treaty was signed at that place on the 4th August, 1791; while the Empress Catherine, who was not yet formally Aug. 12, 1790. included in the pacification, formally intimated her intention of suspending hostilities to the courts of St.-James's and Berlin, and, as a gage of her sincerity, concluded at Verela a peace with the King of Sweden, who, at the instigation of England and Prussia, had taken up arms, and contended with undaunted valour against his gigantic neighbour (2).

This general and rapid pacification of Europe, this stilling of so many passions and allaying of so many jealousies, was not the result of accident. It arose from the general consternation which the rapid progress of the French Revolution occasioned, and the clear perception which all the cabinets now began to have of the imminent danger to every settled institution from the contagion of its principles. But, amidst the general alarm, wiser principles were generally prevalent than could reasonably have been anticipated, as to the means of warding off the danger. Mr. Pitt in England, Kaunitz at Vienna, and Hertzberg at Berlin, concurred in opinion, that it would be imprudent and dangerous to oppose the progress of innovation in France, if it could be moderated by a party in that country sufficiently strong to prevent it from running into excess; and that, in the mean time, the strictest measures should be adopted which circumstances would admit, to prevent its principles from spreading into other states. Such were the maxims on which the conduct of England, Austria, and Prussia were founded during the first two years of the Revolution; though Catherine, more vehement and imperious in her disposition, or possibly more sagacious in her anticipations, never ceased to urge the necessity of a general confederacy to arrest the march of so formidable a convulsion. But circumstances at length occurred, which put a period to these moderate councils at Vienna and Berlin, and precipitated the European monarchies into the terrible contest which awaited them (3).

From the time that Louis had been brought a prisoner to Paris on October 5, 1789, he had recommended to the King of Spain to pay no regard to any public act bearing his name, which was not confirmed by an autograph letter from himself; and in the course of the following summer, he authorized the Baron Breteuil, his former minister, to sound the German powers on the possibility of extricating him from the state of bondage to which he was reduced. In November 1790, after he found that he was to be forced to adopt measures of hostility against the Church, he resolved to be more explicit; and, in December 1790, he addressed a circular to the whole sovereigns of Europe, with a view to the formation of a congress, supported by an armed force, to consider the means of arresting the factions at Paris, and re-establishing a constitutional monarchy in France (4). This circular excited every

(1) Hard. i. 83, 86. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 17, 19.

(2) Hard. i. 86, 87.

(3) Hard. i. 85, 90.

(4) "The dispositions of your Majesty," said he, in this circular, "have awakened my warmest gratitude, and I invoke them at this moment, when,

where the warmest feelings of sympathy and commiseration; but the policy of the cabinets, notwithstanding, continued divided,—that of Vienna still adhered to the necessity of recognising the revolutionary *régime*, those of St.-Petersburg and Stockholm openly proclaimed the necessity of an immediate crusade against the infected powers (1).

So early as the close of 1790, however, the violent proceedings of the National Assembly had brought them into collision with the states of the empire. The laws against the emigrants and priests, which were passed with so much precipitance by that body, infringed the rights of the German vassals of the French crown in Alsace and Lorraine, whose rights were guaranteed by the treaty of Westphalia; and the Emperor, as the head of the empire, addressed 11th Dec. 1790. a remonstrance to the French King on the subject. Overruled by his revolutionary ministry, Louis made answer, that the affair was foreign to the empire, as the princes and prelates affected were reached as vassals of France, not as members of the empire, and that indemnities had been offered. This answer was not deemed satisfactory; a warm altercation ensued: Leopold asserted, in a spirited manner, the rights of the German princes; and this dispute, joined to the obvious and increasing dangers of his sister, Marie-Antoinette, gradually inclined the Emperor to more vigorous measures, and strengthened the bonds of union with Frederick-William, whose chivalrous spirit and heroic courage more openly inclined towards the deliverance of the unhappy princess. The King of England, also, took a vivid interest in the misfortunes of the royal family of France; promising, as Elector of Hanover, to concur in any measures which might be deemed necessary to extricate them from their embarrassments; and he sent Lord Elgin to Leopold, who was then travelling in Italy, to concert measures for the common object. An envoy from Prussia, at the same time, reached the Emperor, and to them was soon joined the Count d'Artois, who was at Venice, and brought to the scene of deliberation the warmth, courage, and inconsiderate energy, which had rendered him the first decided opponent of the Revolution, and ultimately proved so fatal to the fortunes of his family (2).

Mean-while, the King and Queen of France, finding their situation insupportable, and being aware that not only their liberty, but their lives were now endangered, resolved to make every exertion to break their fetters. With this view, they dispatched secret agents to Brussels and Cologne, to communicate with the Emperor and King of Prussia; and Count Alphonso de Durfort was instructed to inform the Count d'Artois, that the King could no longer influence his ministers; that he was in reality the prisoner of M. La Fayette, who secretly and hypocritically was conducting every thing to a republic; that they were filled with the most anxious desire to make their escape by the route either of Metz or Valenciennes, and placed entire reliance on the zeal and activity of their august relatives. Furnished with these instructions, Count Durfort left Paris in the end of April, 1791, and soon joined the Count d'Artois at Venice, who was already arranging with the English and Prussian envoys, the most probable means of overcoming the scruples of the Emperor (3).

notwithstanding my acceptance of the new constitution, the factious openly avow their intention of overturning the monarchy. I have addressed myself to the Emperor, the Empress of Russia, the Kings of Spain and Sweden, and have suggested the plan of a congress of the principal powers, supported by an armed force, as the best means of arresting the factions here, establishing a more desirable order of things in this kingdom, and preventing the malady

under which it labours from extending to the adjoining states. I need hardly say, that the most absolute secrecy is required in regard to this communication."—HARD. i. 94, 95.

(1) Hard. i. 95, 97.

(2) Hard. i. 100, 107.

(3) Hard. i. 105, 111. Bertrand de Molleville, Mém. iii. 147, 170.

When these different parties met with the Emperor at Mantua, on 20th May, 1791, the most discordant plans were submitted for his consideration. That of the Count d'Artois, which was really drawn up by M. Calonne, the former minister of Louis XVI, was the most warlike, and proposed the adoption, in July following, of hostile measures. Alarmed by the menacing principles openly announced by the National Assembly, and by the growing symptoms of disaffection among their own subjects, the Emperor of Germany, the King of Sardinia, and the King of Spain, concluded an agreement at Mantua, in May, 1791, by which it was concerted, "1. That the Emperor should assemble thirty-five thousand men on the frontiers of Flanders, while fifteen thousand soldiers of the Germanic Body should present themselves in Alsace; fifteen thousand Swiss on the frontiers of Franche-Comté; fifteen thousand Piedmontese on the frontiers of Dauphiny; and the King of Spain collect an army of twenty thousand men on the Pyrenees. 2. That these forces should be formed into five armies, who should act on their respective frontiers of France, and join themselves to the malecontents in the provinces and the troops who had preserved their allegiance to the throne. 3. That in the following July, a protestation should be issued by the princes of the House of Bourbon, and immediately after a manifesto by the Allied Powers. 4. That the object of these assemblages of troops was, that the French people, terrified at the approach of the Allied forces, should seek for safety in submitting themselves to the King, and imploring his mediation." The sovereigns counted on the neutrality of England; but it was expected, from the assurances given by Lord Elgin, that, as Elector of Hanover, the English monarch would accede to the coalition (1).

Meanwhile, the royal family of France, following the councils of Baron Breteuil, and influenced by the pressing and increasing dangers of their situation, had finally resolved on escaping from Paris. While Louis and M. de Bouillé were combining the means of an evasion, either towards Montmédy or Metz, the principal courts of Europe were apprised of the design; Leopold gave orders to the government of the Low-Countries to place at the disposal of the King, when he reached their frontiers, not only the Imperial troops, but the sums which might be in the public treasury; while the King of Sweden, stimulated by his chivalrous spirit, and the instances of Catherine of Russia, drew near to the frontiers of France, under pretence of drinking the waters, but in reality to receive the august fugitives. The Emperor, the Count d'Artois, and M. Calonne, however, strongly opposed the contemplated flight as extremely hazardous to the royal family, and calculated to retard rather than advance the ultimate settlement of the affairs of France. They were persuaded that the only way to effect this object, so desirable to that country and to Europe, was to support the Royalist and Constitutional party in France, by the display of such a force as might enable them to throw off the yoke of the revolutionary faction, and establish a permanent constitution by the consent of king, nobles, and people. Impressed with these ideas, the Emperor addressed a circular (2) from Padua to the principal

(1) Hard. i. Jom. i. 262. Pièces Just. No. 1. Mig. i. 181.

(2) He invited the Sovereigns to issue a joint declaration.—"That they regard the cause of his most Christian Majesty as their own; that they demand that that prince and his family should forthwith be set at liberty, and permitted to go wherever they chose, under the safeguard of inviolability and respect to their persons; that they will combine to avenge, in the most striking manner,

every attempt on the liberty, honour, or security of the King, the Queen, or the royal family; that they will recognise as legitimate only those laws which shall have been agreed to by the King when in a state of entire liberty; and that they will exert all their power to put a period to an usurpation of power which has assumed the character of an open revolt, and which it behoves all established governments for their own sake to repress."—Hard. i. 116.



powers, in which he announced the principles according to which, in his opinion, the common efforts should be directed. At the same time Count Lamarck, a secret agent of Louis, came to London to endeavour to engage Mr. Pitt in the same cause; but nothing could induce the English government to swerve from the strict neutrality which, on a full consideration of the case, they had resolved to adopt (1). At Vienna, however, the efforts of the anti-revolutionary party were more successful; and on the 25th July, Prince Kaunitz and Bischofswerder signed, on the part of Austria and Prussia, a convention, wherein it was stipulated that the two courts should unite their good offices to combine the European powers to some common measure in regard to France, and that they should conclude a treaty of alliance, as soon as peace was established between the Empress Catherine and the Ottoman Porte, and that the former power, as well as Great-Britain, the States-General, and the Elector of Saxony, should be invited to accede to it. This convention, intended to put a bridle on the ambition of Russia on the one hand, and of France on the other, deserves attention as the first basis of the grand alliance which afterwards wrought such wonders in Europe (2).

The pressing dangers of the royal family of France, after the failure of the flight to Varennes, and their open imprisonment in the Tuileries by the revolutionists, soon after suggested the necessity of more urgent measures. It was agreed for his purpose, that a personal interview should take place between the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, to concert measures on that all-important subject. This led to the famous meeting at Pilnitz, which took place in August 1791, between the Emperor and the King of Prussia. There was framed the no less celebrated Declaration of Pilnitz (3), which was conceived in the following terms:—"Their Majesties, the Emperor and the King of Prussia, having considered the representations of Monsieur, brother of the King, and of his Excellency the Count d'Artois, declare conjointly, that they consider the situation of the King of France as a matter of common interest to all the European sovereigns. They hope that the reality of that interest will be duly appreciated by the other powers, whose assistance they will invoke, and that, in consequence, they will not decline to employ their forces, conjointly with their Majesties, in order to put the King of France in a situation to lay the foundation of a monarchical government, conformable alike to the rights of sovereigns and the well-being of the French nation. In that case, the Emperor and King are resolved to act promptly with the forces necessary to attain their common end. In the mean time, they will give the requisite orders for the troops to hold themselves in immediate readiness for active service (4)." It was alleged by the French, that, besides this, several secret articles were agreed to by the Allied Sovereigns; but no sufficient evidence has ever been produced to substantiate the allegation (5).

Although these declarations appeared abundantly hostile to the usurpation of government by the democracy of France, the Allied Powers soon proved that they had no serious intention at that period of going to war. On the con-

(1) *Hard.* i. 114, 119.

(2) *Hard.* i. 149, 121.

(3) *Jom.* i. 265. *Pièces Just.* No. 1.

(4) "As far as we have been able to trace," said Mr. Pitt, "the Declaration signed at Pilnitz referred to the imprisonment of Louis XVI; its immediate view was to effect his deliverance, if a concert sufficiently extensive could be formed for that purpose. It left the internal state of France to be decided by the King restored to his liberty, with the free con-

sent of the States of the kingdom, and it did not contain one word relative to the dismemberment of the country. [*Parl. Hist.* xxxiv. 1315.]—"This, though not a plan for the dismemberment of France," said Mr. Fox, in reply, "was, in the eye of reason and common sense, an aggression against it. There was, indeed, no such thing as a treaty of Pilnitz; but there was a Declaration, which amounted to an act of hostile aggression." [*Id.* 1356.]

(5) *Ann. Reg.* 1792, 86, 87.

trary, their measures evinced, after the declaration of Pilnitz, that they were actuated by pacific sentiments; and, in October 1791, it was officially announced by M. Montmorin, the minister of foreign affairs, to the Assembly, "that the King had no reason to apprehend aggression from any foreign power (4)." Their real object was to induce the French, by the fear of approaching danger, to liberate Louis from the perilous situation in which he was placed. Their forces were by no means in a condition to undertake a contest (2). This is admitted by the ablest of the Republican writers (3).

Nor did the actions of these powers belie their declaration: No warlike preparations were made by the German states, no armies were collected on the frontiers of France; and accordingly, when the struggle began next year, they were taken entirely by surprise. France had one hundred and thirty thousand men on the Rhine, and along her eastern frontier, while the Austrians had only ten thousand men in the Low-Countries (4).

In truth, the primary and real object of the Convention of Pilnitz was the extrication of the King and royal family from personal danger: and no sooner did this object appear to be gained by their liberation from confinement, and the acceptance of the constitution, than the coalesced sovereigns laid aside all thoughts of hostile operations, for which they were but ill prepared, and which the urgent state of affairs in Poland, ready to be swallowed up by the ambition of Catherine, rendered in an especial manner unadvisable. When Frederick-William received the intelligence, he exclaimed—"At length then the peace of Europe is secured." The Emperor testified his satisfaction at the acceptance of the constitution, in a letter addressed to Louis; and shortly after dispatched a circular to all the sovereigns of Europe, in which he announced that the King's acceptance of the constitution had removed the reason for hostile demonstrations, and that they were in consequence suspended (5). The cabinet of Berlin entered entirely into the same sentiments; and the opinion was general, both there and at Vienna, that the troubles of France were at length permanently appeased by the great concessions made to the democratic party; and that prudence and address were all that was

(1) "We are accused," said M. Montmorin, the minister of foreign affairs, in a report laid before the Assembly on 31st October, 1791, "of wishing to propagate our opinions, and of trying to raise the people of other states against their governments. I know that such accusations are false, so far as regards the French Ministry, but it is too true that individuals, and even societies, have sought to establish with that view correspondences in the neighbouring states; and it is also true, that all the princes, and almost all the governments of Europe, are daily insulted in our incendiary journals. The King, by accepting the constitution, has removed the danger with which you were threatened: nothing indicates at this moment any disposition on their part to a hostile enterprise."—*Jom.* i. 286; *Pièces Just.* No. 6.

(2) *Bot.* i. 73. *Jom.* i. 191. *Lac.* ix. 24. *Ann. Reg.* xxxiv. 86.

(3) "The declaration of Pilnitz," says Thiers, "remained without effect; either from a cooling of zeal on the part of the Allied Sovereigns, or from a sense of the danger which Louis would have run, after he was, from the failure of the flight to Varennes, a prisoner in the hands of the Assembly. His acceptance of the constitution was an additional reason for awaiting the result of experience, before plunging into active operations. This was the opinion of Leopold and his minister Kaunitz. Accordingly, when Louis notified to the foreign courts that he had accepted the constitution, and was

resolved faithfully to observe it, Austria returned an answer entirely pacific, and Prussia and England did the same."—*Thiers*, ii. 19.

(4) *Ann. Reg.* xxxiii. 206. *Th.* ii. 78.

(5) "His Majesty announces to all the courts, to whom he transmitted his first circular, dated Padua, 6th July, that the situation of the King of France, which gave occasion to the said circular, having changed, he deems it incumbent upon him to lay before them the views which he now entertains on the subject. His Majesty is of opinion, that the King of France is now to be regarded as free; and, in consequence, his acceptance of the constitution, and all the acts following thereon, are valid. He hopes that the effect of this acceptance will be to restore order in France, and give ascendancy to persons of moderate principles, according to the wish of his most Christian Majesty; but as these appearances may prove fallacious, and the disorders of license and the violence towards the King may be renewed, he is also of opinion, that the measures concerted between the sovereigns should be suspended, and not entirely abandoned, and that they should cause their respective ambassadors at Paris to declare, that the coalition still subsists, and that, if necessary, they would still be ready to support the rights of the King and of the monarchy."—*Letter*, 23d October, 1791, *Mass.* i. 159.

now necessary to enable the French monarch to reign, if not with his former lustre, at least without risk, and in a peaceable manner (1).

These being the views entertained by the two powers whose situation necessarily led them to take the lead in the strife, it was of comparatively little importance what were the feelings of the more distant or inferior courts. In the North, Catherine and Gustavus were intent on warlike measures, and refused to admit into their presence the ambassador who came to announce the King's acceptance of the constitution, upon the ground that he could not be regarded as a free agent; and the courts of Spain and Sardinia had coldly received the intelligence. Impressed with the idea that the King's life was seriously menaced, and that he was, even in accepting the constitution, acting under compulsion, these Northern and Southern potentates entered into <sup>19th Oct. 1791.</sup> an agreement, the purport of which was, that an armament of thirty-six thousand Russians and Swedes were to be conveyed from the Baltic to a point on the coast of Normandy, where they were to be disembarked and march direct to Paris, while they were supported by a hostile demonstration from Spain and Piedmont on the Pyrenees and Alps: a project obviously hopeless, if not supported by the forces of Austria and Prussia on the Rhine, and which the failure of the expedition to Varennes, and the subsequent course of events, entirely dissipated (2).

Meanwhile the Count d'Artois, and the emigrant nobility, taking counsel of nothing but their valour, and relying on the open support and encouragement afforded them by the Courts of Stockholm and St.-Petersburg, proceeded with the rashness and impetuosity which, in every period of the Revolution, have been the characteristics of their race. Numerous assemblages took place at Brussels, Coblenz, and Ettenheim: the Empress Catherine, in a letter addressed to Marshal Broglie, which they ostentatiously published, manifested the warm interest which she took in their cause; horses and arms were purchased, and organized corps of noble adventurers already began to be formed on the right bank of the Rhine. Transported with ardour at so many <sup>Sept. 10, 1791.</sup> favourable appearances, the exiled princes addressed to Louis an open remonstrance, in which they strongly urged him to refuse his acceptance to the constitution which was about to be submitted to him; represented that all his former concessions had led only to impunity, to every species of violence, and the despotism of the most abandoned persons in the kingdom; protested against any apparent consent which he might be compelled to give to the constitution, and renewed the assurances of the intention of themselves and the Allied Powers speedily to deliver him from his fetters (3).

The only point that remained in dispute between the Emperor and the French King was the indemnities to be provided to the German princes and prelates who had been dispossessed by the decrees of the National Assembly; but on this point Leopold evinced a firmness worthy of the head of the empire. Early in December he addressed to them a formal letter, in which he announced his own resolution and that of the Diet "to afford them every succour which the dignity of the Imperial Crown and the maintenance of the public constitutions of the empire required, if they did not obtain that complete restitution or indemnification which existing treaties provided." Notwithstanding this, however, the cabinets of Vienna and Berlin still entertained so confident an opinion that the differences with France would terminate

(1) Hard. i. 157, 159.

(2) Hard. i. 159, 163.

(3) Hard. i. 152, 153, 165.

amicably, and that Louis, now restored to his authority, would speedily do justice to the injured parties, that they not only made no hostile preparations whatever, but withdrew a large proportion of their troops from the Flemish provinces (1).

It was  
abandoned  
by the  
Allies.

In truth, though they felt the necessity of taking some measures against the common dangers which threatened all established institutions with destruction, the Allied Sovereigns had an undefined dread of the magical and unseen powers with which France might assail them, and pierce them to the heart through the bosom of their own troops. The language held out by the National Assembly and its powerful orators, of war to the palace and peace to the cottage; the hand of fraternity which they offered to extend to the disaffected in all countries who were inclined to throw off the yoke of oppression; the seeds of sedition which its emissaries had so generally spread through the adjoining states, diffused an anxious feeling among the friends of order throughout the world, and inspired the dread, that by bringing up their forces to the vicinity of the infected districts, they might be seized with the contagion, and direct their first strokes against the power which commanded them. England, notwithstanding the energetic remonstrances of Mr. Burke, was still reposing in fancied security; and Catherine of Russia, solely bent on territorial aggrandizement, was almost entirely absorbed by the troubles of Poland, and the facilities which they afforded to her ambitious projects. Prussia, however anxious to espouse the cause of royalty, was unequal to a contest with revolutionary France; and Austria, under the pacific Leopold, had entirely abandoned her military projects since the throne of Louis had been nominally re-established after the state of thralldom, immediately consequent upon the flight to Varennes, had been relaxed. Accordingly, the protestation and manifesto contemplated in the agreement at Mantua never were issued, and the military preparations provided for by that treaty never took place. Of all the powers mentioned in the agreement, the Bishop of Spire, the Elector of Treves, and the Bishop of Strasburg, alone took up arms; and their feeble contingents, placed in the very front of danger, were dissolved at the first summons of the French government (2).

The French  
Revolution-  
ary party  
resolve on  
war.

But it was no part of the policy of the ruling party at Paris to remain at peace. They felt, as they themselves expressed it, "that their Revolution could not stand still; it must advance and embrace other countries, or perish in their own." Indeed, the spirit of revolution is so nearly allied to that of military adventure, that it is seldom that the one exists without leading to the other. The same restless activity, the same contempt of danger, the same craving for excitation, are to be found in both: it is extremely difficult for the fervour excited by a successful revolt to subside till it is turned into the channel of military exploit. Citizens who have overturned established institutions, who have tasted of the intoxicating draught of popular applause, who have felt the sweets of unbridled power during the brief period which elapses before they fall under the yoke of despots of their own creation, are incapable of returning to the habits of pacific life. The unceasing toil, the obscure destiny, the humble enjoyments of laborious industry, seem intolerable to men who have shared in the glories of popular resistance; while the heart-stirring accompaniments, the licentious habits the captivating glory of arms, appear the only employment worthy of their renown. The insecurity of property and fall of credit which invariably follow

(1) Hard. i. 169, 171.

(2) Lac. ix. 24, 25, 26. Th. ii. 76, 77, 78. Dum.

410. Bot. i. 73, 75. Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 86, 87.  
Hard. i. 172, 180.

any considerable political convulsion, throw multitudes out of employment, and increase the necessity for some drain to let off the tumultuous activity of the people. It has, accordingly, been often observed, that democratic states have, in every age, been the most warlike, and the most inclined to aggression upon their neighbours (1); and the reason must be the same in all periods, that revolutionary enterprise both awakens the passions, and induces the necessity which leads to war.

Declamations of the Girondists in favour of war. The party of the Girondists, who were at that period the ruling power in France, were resolutely bent on war. The remarkable speech has already been given which Isnard, on November 29, 1791, delivered in the National Assembly (2). Soon after, repeated philippics, in still more violent language, were pronounced in the Assembly by Brissot and Vergniaud against the European powers, which, even according to the admission of the French themselves, "were so many declarations of war, and imprudent provocations, which were calculated to put the French in hostility with all Europe." "The information of Brissot, the profound political views which he develops, are so entirely at variance with the sophisms with which his speech abounds," says Jomini, "that one would be inclined to suppose he had been the secret agent of the English government, if we did not know that his errors at that period were shared by all the most enlightened men of France. An orator, enthusiastic even to madness, was alone capable of bringing on his country by such harangues, when torn and supported without, the hatred of all the European chiefs. No paraphrase can convey an adequate idea of the violence of the leaders of the Assembly at that period: we must bequeath their speeches to posterity, as frightful proofs of what can be effected by an ill directed enthusiasm and spirit of party (3)."

Dec. 29, 1791. "You are about," said Brissot, on 29th December, 1791, "to judge the cause of kings: show yourselves worthy of so august a function: place yourselves above them, or you will be unworthy of freedom. The French Revolution has overturned all former diplomacy; though the people are not yet every where free, governments are no longer able to stifle their voice. The sentiments of the English on our Revolution are not doubtful: they behold in it the best guarantee of their own freedom. It is highly improbable that the British government will ever venture, even if it had the means, to attack the French Revolution; that improbability is converted into a certainty, when we consider the divisions of their Parliament, the weight of their public debt, the declining condition of their Indian affairs. England would never hesitate between its king and its liberty: between the repose of which it has so much need, and a contest which would probably occasion its ruin. Austria is as little to be feared: her soldiers, whom her princes in vain seek to estrange from the people, remember that it is among them that they find their friends, their relations; and they will not separate their cause from that of freedom. The successor of Frederick, if he has any prudence, will hesitate to ruin for ever, in combating our forces, an army which, once destroyed, will never be restored. In vain would the ambition of Russia interfere with our Revolution: a new Revolution in Poland would arrest her arms, and render Warsaw the centre of freedom to the East of Europe. Search the map of the world, you will in vain look for a power whom France has any reason to dread. If any foreign states exist inclined for war, we must get the start of them. He who is anticipated is already half

(1) Mitford's History of Greece. Sismondi's Rep. Ital.

(2) See *ante*, 186.

(3) Jom. i. 198. *Pièces Just.* i. 7, 8, and 9.

vanquished. If they are only making a pretence of hostile preparations, we must unmask them, and in so doing proclaim to the world their impotence. That act of a great people is what will put the seal to our Revolution. War is now become necessary : France is bound to undertake it to maintain her honour : she would be for ever disgraced, if a few thousand rebels or emigrants could overawe the organs of the law. War is to be regarded as a public blessing. The only evil you have to apprehend is, that it should not arise, and that you should lose the opportunity of finally crushing the insolence of the emigrants. Till you take that decisive step, they will never cease to deceive you by diplomatic falsehood. It is no longer with governments we must treat, it is with their subjects (1)."

"The mask is at length fallen," said the same orator, on the 17th January, 1792. "Your real enemy is declared. General Bender has revealed his name : it is the Emperor. The Electors were mere names, put forward to conceal the real mover—you may now despise the emigrants ; the Electors are no longer worthy of your resentment : fear has prostrated them at your feet. You must anticipate his hostility : Now is the time to show the sincerity of your declaration, a hundred times repeated, that you are resolved to have freedom or death.—Death ! you have no reason to fear it—consider your own situation and that of the Emperor—your constitution is an eternal anathema against absolute thrones : all kings must hate it ; it incessantly acts as their accuser : it daily pronounces their sentence ; it seems to say to each, ' Tomorrow you will not exist, or exist only by the tolerance of the people.' I will not say to the Emperor with your committee, ' Will you engage not to attack France or its independence ? ' but I will say, ' You have formed a league against France, and therefore I will attack you ; ' and that immediate attack is just, is necessary, is commanded alike by imperious circumstances and your oaths (2)." "The French," said Fauchet, on 17th January, 1792, "after having conquered their own freedom, are the natural allies of all free people. All treaties with despots are null in law, and cannot be maintained in fact, without involving the destruction of our Revolution. We have no longer occasion for ambassadors or consuls ; they are only titled spies. When others wish our alliance, let them conquer their freedom ; till then, we will treat them as pacific savages. Let us have no war of aggression ; but war with the princes who conspire on our frontier, with Leopold who seeks to undermine our liberties—cannon are our negotiators—bayonets and millions of freemen our ambassadors (3)."

Brissot was resolved, at all hazards, to have a war with Austria : he was literally haunted day and night by the idea of a secret Austrian cabinet which governed the court, and was incessantly thwarting the designs of the revolutionists. Every thing depended on him and the Girondists, for the European powers were totally unprepared for a contest, and too much occupied with their separate projects to desire a conflict with a revolutionary state in the first burst of its enthusiasm. If the Girondists could have reconciled themselves to the King, they would have disarmed Europe, turned the emigrants into ridicule, and maintained peace. But Brissot and Dumouriez were resolved at all hazards to break it. The former went so far as to propose, that some French soldiers should be disguised as Austrian huzzars, and make a nocturnal attack on the French villages ; upon receipt of the intelligence, a motion was to have been made in the Assembly, and war, it was expected,

(1) Jom. i. Pièces Just. No. 7, 299.

(2) Jom. i. 319. Pièces Just. No. 7.

(3) Jom. i. 323, 324.

would have been instantly decreed in the enthusiasm of the moment. His anxiety for its commencement was indescribable; de Graves, Clavière, and Roland hesitated, on account of the immense responsibility of such an undertaking, but Dumouriez and he uniformly declared that nothing but a war could consolidate the freedom of France, disclose the enemies of the constitution, and unmask the perfidy of the court. Their whole leisure time was employed in studying maps of the Low-Countries, and meditating schemes of aggrandizement in that favourite object of French ambition (1).

When such was the language of the leading men in the French government and National Assembly, it is of little moment to detail the negotiations and mutual recriminations which led to the commencement of hostilities by the French government. The French complained, and apparently with justice, that numerous bodies of emigrants were assembled, and organized at Colblentz, and on other points on the frontier, that the Elector of Treves and the other lesser powers had evaded all demands for their dispersion; that Austrian troops were rapidly defiling towards the Brisgau and the Rhine, and that no satisfactory explanation of these movements had been given (2).

Mutual recriminations which lead to war. April 20, 1792. The Imperialists complained with not less reason, that the French affiliated societies were striving to spread sedition through all the conterminous states; that Piedmont, Switzerland, and Belgium, were agitated by their exertions; that the Parisian orators and journals daily published invitations to all other people to revolt, and offered them the hand of fraternity if they did so; that Avignon and Venaissin had, without the colour of legal right, been annexed to France; and the Catholics and nobles in Alsace deprived of their possessions, honours, and privileges, in violation of the treaty of Westphalia. The ultimatum of Austria was, that the monarchy should be re-established on the footing on which it was placed by the royal ordinance of June 23, 1789; that the property of the church in Alsace should be restored; the fiefs of that province, with the seignorial rights, given back to the German princes, and Avignon, with the Venaissin, to the Pope. These propositions were rejected; and Dumouriez, who had now succeeded to the portfolio of foreign affairs, induced the French King to commence hostilities, in the hope of being able to overrun Flanders before any considerable Austrian forces could be brought up to its support (3). On the 20th April, 1792, Louis had the melancholy duty of declaring war against his own brother-in-law, the King of Hungary and Bohemia.

The real intentions of the allies at this juncture, and the moderation of the views with which they were inspired in regard to the war, are well illustrated by a note communicated by the cabinets of Berlin and Vienna to the Danish government,—in which, renouncing all idea of interfering in the internal affairs of France, they limit their views, even after war had been commenced by France, to the formation of a bulwark against the revolutionary principles of the French republic, and the obtaining of indemnities for the German princes (4). This note is the more remarkable, that it em-

(1) Dom. 410, 411.

(2) Mig. i. 167. Jom. i. 202.

(3) Jom. i. 205. Pièces Just. No. 13. Mig. i. 167.

(4) "The object of the alliance is two-fold. The first object concerns the rights of the dispossessed princes, and the dangers of the propagation of revolutionary principles; the second, the maintenance of the fundamental principles of the French monarchy. The first object is sufficiently explained by its very announcement; the second is not as yet susceptible of any proper determination.

"The Allied Powers have unquestionably, no

right to insist, from a great and independent power such as France, that every thing should be re-established as it was formerly; or that it shall adopt such and such modifications in its government. It results from this, that they will recognise as legal any modification of the monarchical government which the King, when enjoying unrestrained liberty, shall agree to with the legal representatives of the nation. The forces to be employed in this enterprise must be proportioned to its magnitude, and to the resistance which may probably be experienced. With a view to the arrangement of

braces precisely the principles which, announced two-and-twenty years afterwards, in the plains of Champagne, by the Allied Sovereigns, brought the war to a triumphant conclusion.

In contemplation of the approaching struggle, a treaty of alliance, offensive Feb. 7, 1792, and defensive, had been, on 7th Feb. 1792, concluded between Sweden and Austria. But one of the contracting parties did not long survive this measure. On March 1st, Leopold died, leaving his son, Francis II, to succeed to his extensive dominions; and a fortnight after, Gustavus, King of March 16, 1792: Sweden, was assassinated at a masked ball. It seemed as if Providence were preparing a new race of actors for the mighty scenes which were to be performed.

Leopold expired on the 1st March, of a mortification in the stomach. He was succeeded by his son FRANCIS, then hardly twenty-four years of age, whose reign was the most eventful, for long the most disastrous, and ultimately the most glorious in the Austrian annals. He had been brought up at Florence, at the court where his father exerted the philosophic beneficence of his disposition; and had married four years the Princess Elizabeth of Württemberg, who died in childbed on the 8th Feb. 1790; after which, the future Emperor married, in the same year, the Princess Theresa of Naples. The first measures of his reign were popular and judicious: Kaunitz was continued prime minister, and with him were joined Marshal Lascy, long the friend of Leopold, and Count Francis Colloredo, his former preceptor. He suppressed those articles in the journals, in which he was loaded with praise, observing, "It is by my future conduct that I am alone to be judged worthy of praise or blame." Leopold, at his accession, had ordered all the anonymous and secret communications with which a young prince is usually assailed, to be burnt: Francis went a step further, he issued a positive order against any of them being received. When the list of pensioners was submitted to his inspection, he with his own hand erased the name of his mother, observing that it was unbecoming that she should be dependent on the bounty of the state. With such bright colours did the dawn of this eventful and glorious reign arise (1).

Great-Britain still strictly neutral.

Still Great-Britain preserved a strict neutrality. During the whole of 1792, pregnant, as we shall immediately see, with great events, and which brought France to within a hairbreadth of destruction, no attempt was made to take advantage of her weakness, to wreak on that unhappy country the vengeance of national rivalry. England did not, in the hour of France's distress, retaliate upon her the injuries inflicted in the American war. This fact was so notorious, that it was constantly admitted by the French themselves. "There is but one nation," said M. Kersaint in the National Assembly, on Sept. 18, 1792, "whose neutrality on the affairs of France is decidedly pronounced, and that is England (2)."

But the 10th Aug. overturns all these resolutions.

But with the progress of events the policy of Great Britain necessarily underwent a change. The 10th of August came; the throne was overturned, and the royal family put in captivity; the mas-

these objects, the city of Vienna is proposed as a convenient station; but when the armies are assembled, a congress must be established nearer France than that city, followed by a formal declaration of the objects which the Allies have in view in their intervention"—HARD. i. 391, 392.

The same principles were announced by Frederick-William to Prince Hardenberg, in a secret and confidential conversation which that statesman had with his sovereign on July 12, 1792. He declared "that France should not be dismembered in any of

its parts; that the Allies had no intention of interfering in its internal government; but that, as an indispensable preliminary to the settlement of the public disturbances, the King should be set at liberty, and reinvested with his full authority; that the ministers of religion should be restored to their altars, and the dispossessed proprietors to their estates, and that France should pay the expenses of the war."—HARD. i. 400.

(1) HARD. i. 255, 267.

(2) ANN; REG. xxxiv. 181.



sacres of September stained Paris with blood; and the victories of Dumouriez rolled back to the Rhine the tide of foreign invasion. These great events inspired the revolutionary party with such extravagant expectations, that the continuance of peace on the part of England became impossible. In the frenzy of their democratic fury, they used language, and adopted measures, plainly incompatible with the peace or tranquillity of other states. A

Oct. 1792. Jacobin Club of twelve thousand members was established at Chambéry, in Savoy, and a hundred of its most active members were selected as travelling missionaries, "armed with the torch of reason and liberty, for the purpose of enlightening the Savoyards on their regeneration and imprescriptible rights (1)."

French system of progressivism. War was declared against the King of Sardinia on Sept. 15, 1792. An address was voted by this club to the French Convention, as "the legislators of the world," and received by them on 20th October, 1792. They ordered it to be translated into the English, Spanish, and German languages. The rebellious Savoyards next constituted a Convention, in imitation of that of France, and offered to incorporate themselves with the great Republic. On November 21st, this deputation from Savoy was received by the National Assembly, and welcomed with the most rapturous applause; and the president addressed the deputies in a speech, in which he predicted the speedy destruction of all thrones, and regeneration of the human race; and assured the deputies, that "regenerated France would make common cause with all those who are resolved to shake off the yoke, and obey only themselves." The French Convention were not slow in accepting the proffered dominion of Savoy: the committee, to whom it was remitted to consider the subject, reported, "that all considerations, physical, moral, and political, call for the incorporation of that country: all attempts to connect it with Piedmont are fruitless; the Alps eternally force it back into the domains of France; the order of nature would be violated if they were to live under different laws;" and the Assembly unanimously united Savoy with the French Republic, under the name of the Department of Mont-Blanc. The seizure of Savoy was immediately followed by that of Nice, with its territory, and Oct. 27, 1792. Monaco, which were formed into the department of the Maritime Alps. "Let us not fear," said the reporter, who spoke the opinion of the Convention with only one dissentient voice, "that this new incorporation will become a source of discord. It adds nothing to the hate of oppressors against the French Revolution; it adds only to the means of the power by which we shall break their league. The die is thrown: *we have rushed into the career: all governments are our enemies*—all people are our friends: we must be destroyed, or they shall be free: and the axe of liberty, after having prostrated thrones, shall fall on the head of whoever wishes to collect their ruins (2)."

Italy was the next object of attack. "Piedmont," said Brissot in his report on Genoa, "must be free. Your sword must not be returned to its scabbard before all the subjects of your enemy are free; before you are encircled by a girdle of republics." To facilitate such a work, a French fleet cast anchor in the bay of Genoa; a Jacobin club was established in that city, where the French commanders assisted, and from which adulatory addresses were voted to the French Convention; while Kellermann, on assuming the command of the army of the Alps, informed his soldiers, that "he had received orders to conquer Rome, and that these orders should be obeyed." The French ambassador at Rome was so active in endeavouring to stimulate the people to insurrec-

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 135.

(2) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 139. Bot. i. 88.

tion, that at length, on 14th January, 1793, when proceeding in his carriage to one of his assemblies, he was seized by the mob, at whom he had discharged Jan. 14, 1793. a pistol, and murdered in the streets. This atrocious action naturally excited the most violent indignation in the Convention, and a decree passed, authorizing the executive to take the most summary measures of vengeance (1). Nor was Switzerland more fortunate in avoiding the revolutionary tempest. Geneva did not long escape. A French army, under General Montesquieu, approached its walls; but that general evinced some hesitation at taking a step which was equivalent to declaring war against the Helvetic Confederacy. Brissot, however, in a laboured report on the subject, declared, "That the revolution must take place there, or our own will retrograde," and insisted on the Swiss troops being withdrawn from the city, that is, on its being delivered over unarmed to the revolutionary faction. To this Dec. 27, 1792. humiliating condition the Swiss submitted, and in consequence, on 27th December, the revolutionists overturned the government, and delivered over that celebrated city to the French troops. Nor were the small German princes neglected; the Elector Palatine, though all along remaining neutral, had his property on the Lower-Rhine put under sequestration, and considerable portions of the territories of Hesse-Darmstadt, Weid-Runchel, and Nassau-Sarbrook, annexed to the neighbouring departments of France (2).

At length, on November 19th, a decree was unanimously passed by the Assembly, which openly placed the French republic at war with all established governments. It was in these terms: "The National Convention declares, in the name of the French nation, that it will grant *fraternity and assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty*; and it charges the executive power to send the necessary orders to the generals, to give succour to such people, and to defend those citizens who have suffered, or may suffer, in the cause of liberty (3)." Brissot himself, at a subsequent period, styled this decree "absurd, impolitic, and justly exciting the disquietude of foreign cabinets (4)." And this was followed up, on December 15th, by a resolution so extraordinary and unprecedented, that no abstract of its contents can convey an idea of the spirit of the original (5).

This decree was immediately transmitted to the generals on the frontier, with a commentary and explanatory notes, more violent, if possible, than the original. To assist them in their labours, commissaries were appointed with all the armies, whose peculiar duty it was to superintend the revolutionizing

(1) Bot. i. 237.

(2) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 153. Bot. i. 96, 97, 237.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 153.

(4) Brissot à ses Committants, 88. London edition.

(5) "The National Convention, faithful to the principles of the sovereignty of the people, which will not permit them to acknowledge any of the institutions militating against it, decrees as follows: —1. In all those countries which are or shall be occupied by the armies of the French Republic, the generals shall immediately proclaim, in the name of the French people, the abolition of *all existing imposts and contributions*, of tithes, feudal and manorial rights, all real and personal servitude, and generally of all privileges. 2. They shall proclaim the *sovereignty of the people*, and the suppression of all existing authorities; they shall convoke the people to nominate a provisional government, and shall cause this decree to be translated into the language of that country. 3. All agents, or officers of the former government, military or civil, and all individuals reputed noble, shall be ineligible to any place in such provisional government on the first election. 4. The generals shall forthwith place

under the safeguard of the French Republic all property, movable or immovable, belonging to the treasury, the prince, his adherents and attendants, and to all public bodies and communities, both civil and religious, etc. 9. The provisional government shall cease as soon as the inhabitants, after having declared the sovereignty of the people, shall have organized a free and popular form of government. 10. In case the common interest should require the further continuance of the troops of the Republic on the foreign territory, the Republic shall make the necessary arrangements for their subsistence. 11. The French nation declares that it will treat as *enemies the people, who, refusing or renouncing liberty and equality, are desirous of preserving their prince and privileged castes, or of entering into an accommodation with them*. The nation promises and engages not to lay down its arms, until the sovereignty and liberty of the people, on whose territory the French army shall have entered, shall be established, and not to consent to any arrangement or treaty with the princes and privileged persons so dispossessed, with whom the Republic is at war."—Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 155.

of the conquered districts. They were enjoined "not to allow even a shadow of the ancient authorities to remain;" and "not only to encourage the writings destined to popular instruction, the patriotic societies, and all the establishments consecrated to the propagation of liberty, but themselves to have immediate communication with the people, and counteract, by frequent explanations, all the falsehoods by which evil-minded persons could lead them astray (1)." The decree of 19th November was accompanied by an exposition, addressed to the general of every army in France, containing a schedule as regularly digested as any by which the ordinary routine of business in any department of the state could be digested. Each commander was furnished with a general blank formula of a letter for all the nations of the world, beginning with these words, "The people of France to the people of——, greeting. We are come to expel your tyrants."—And when it was proposed in the National Convention, on the motion of M. Baraillon (2), to declare expressly that the decree of 19th November was confined to the nations with whom they were at war, the motion was negatived by a large majority.

Alarm excited in Great-Britain by these proceedings. These unprecedented and alarming proceedings, joined to the rapid increase and treasonable language of the Jacobin societies in this country, excited a very general feeling of disquietude in Great-Britain. The army and navy had both been reduced in the early part of the year 1792, in pursuance of a recommendation from the throne, and the English government had resisted the most earnest solicitations to join the confederacy against France. Even after the throne was overturned on the 10th August, the British Ministry enjoined their ambassador, before leaving a capital where there was no longer a stable government, to renew their assurances of neutrality; and the French minister, M. Le Brun, declared, that the French government were confident that "the British cabinet would not at this decisive moment depart from the justice, moderation, and impartiality which it had hitherto manifested." But when the National Convention began openly to aim at revolutionizing all other countries, their proceedings were looked upon with distrust: and this was heightened into aversion when they showed a disposition to include England among the states, to whose rebellious subjects they extended the hand of fraternity (3).

The London Corresponding, and four other societies, on 7th November, presented an address, filled with the most revolutionary sentiments, to the National Assembly, which was received with the warmest expressions of approbation; and so strongly did the belief prevail in France that England was on the verge of a convulsion, that, on the 21st November, the President Gregori declared (4), that these "respectable islanders, once our masters in the social art, have now become our disciples; and, treading in our steps, soon will the high-spirited English strike a blow which shall resound to the extremity of Asia."

Threatened opening of the Scheldt. At the same period the French committed an act of aggression on the Dutch, then in alliance with Great-Britain, which necessarily

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 153, 156.

The ablest writers of France fully admit the insane desire for foreign warfare, which at that period had seized on its government. "Every one," says Marshal St.-Cyr, "of the least foresight, at the close of 1792, was aware of the dangers which menaced the Republic, and were lost in astonishment, I will not say at the imprudence, but the folly of the Convention, which, instead of seeking to diminish the number of its enemies, seemed resolved to augment them by successive insults, not

merely against all kings, but every existing government. A blind and groundless confidence had taken possession of their minds; they thought only of, dethroning kings by their decrees, leaving the armies on which the Republic depended in a state of entire destitution."—*St.-Cyr, Memoirs*, i. 19, 20.

(2) Parl. Hist. xxxiv. 1310, 1311.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 163, 165; and State Papers, 327.

(4) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 137, and State Papers, 344, 346.

brought them in collision with the latter power. By the treaty of Munster, it had been provided that the Scheldt was to remain for ever closed; but the career of conquest having brought the French armies to Antwerp, a decree of the Convention was passed on November 16th, ordering the French commander-in-chief to open the Scheldt: and by another decree, passed on the same day, the French troops were ordered to pursue the fugitive Austrians into the Dutch territory. These directions were immediately carried into effect by a French squadron, in defiance of the Dutch authorities, sailing up the Scheldt to assist in the siege of the citadel of Antwerp. The French did not attempt to justify these violations of subsisting treaties on any grounds recognised by the law of nations, but contended, "that treaties extorted by cupidity, and yielded by despotism, could not bind the free and enfranchised Belgians." What rendered this aggression altogether inexcusable, was that the French had, only eight years before, viz. in 1784, interfered to prevent a similar opening of the Scheldt, when attempted by Austria, then mistress of the Low-Countries, and had succeeded in resisting that aggression upon the ground of its violating the rights of the United-Provinces, as established by the treaty in 1731 (1).

Preparations for war in England. In these alarming circumstances the English militia were called out, the Tower was put in a state of defence, and Parliament summoned for the 13th December. In the speech from the throne, the perilous nature of the new principles of interference with other states, proclaimed and acted upon by the French rulers, was strongly pointed out. "I have carefully observed," said the King, "a strict neutrality in the present war on the continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference in the internal affairs of France; but it is impossible to see, without the most serious uneasiness, the strong and increasing indications which have there appeared of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies the States-General, who have observed the same neutrality with myself, measures which are neither conformable to the law of nations, nor to the stipulations of existing treaties." An angry correspondence, in consequence, ensued between the British cabinet and the French ambassador, which having led to no satisfactory result, the armaments of England continued without intermission, and corresponding preparations were made in the French harbours. "England," said Lord Grenville, in a note to M. Chauvelin, the French envoy, "never will consent that France should arrogate to herself the power of annulling at pleasure, and under cover of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the sole judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties, and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers. This government will also never see with indifference, that France shall make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low-Countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, let her renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, disturbing their tranquillity, or violating their rights (2)."

To this it was replied by M. Le Brun, the French envoy,—“The design of the Convention has never been to engage itself to make the cause of some

(1) Le Brun's Memorial to the Convention. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 165; and xxxiv. 173. *Séjour*, ii. 78, pers. No. 1. 79.

(2) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 168, 178; and *State Papers*.

foreign individuals the cause of the whole French nation ; but when a people, enslaved by a despot, shall have had the courage to break its chains; when this people, restored to liberty, shall be constituted in a manner to make clearly heard the expression of the general will; when that general will shall call for the assistance and fraternity of the French nation, it is then that the decree of the 19th will find its natural application; and this cannot appear strange to any one (1)."

The intentions of Great Britain, at this period, in regard to France, and the line of conduct which, in conjunction with her allies, she had chalked out for herself before the war was precipitated by the execution of the King, cannot 29th Dec. 1792. be better illustrated than by reference to an official despatch from Lord Grenville to the British ambassador at St.-Petersburg, on the subject of the proposed confederation against the French Republic. From this important document it appears, that England laid it down as the basis of the alliance, that the French should be left entirely at liberty to arrange their government and internal concerns for themselves; and that the efforts of the allies should be limited to preventing their interference with other states, or extending their conquests or propagandism beyond their own frontier (2).

But though these were the views of the English cabinet, very different ideas prevailed with the rulers of French affairs. The determination of the French government to spread their principles of revolution in England, was strongly manifested in a circular letter, addressed by Monge, the minister of marine, to the inhabitants of the French seaports, on December 31, 1792, more than a month before the declaration of war. "The King and English Parliament," said he, "wish to make war upon us; but will the English republicans suffer it? Already these freemen testify the repugnance which they feel at bearing arms against their brethren the French. We will fly to their assistance, we will make a descent in that island, we will hurl there 50,000 caps of liberty, we will plant among them the sacred tree, and hold out our arms to our republican brethren. The tyranny of their government shall soon be destroyed." When such was the language used by the French ministers towards a people with whom they were still at peace, the maintenance of any terms of accommodation was obviously out of the question, the more especially when such sentiments met with a responsive voice from a numerous party on this side of the Channel (3).

(1) Memorial by Le Brun. Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 174.

(2) In this important state paper, Lord Grenville observes—"The two leading points on which such explanation will naturally turn are, the line of conduct to be pursued previous to the commencement of hostilities, with a view, if possible, to avert them; and the nature and amount of the forces which the powers engaged in this concert might be enabled to use, supposing such extremities unavoidable. With respect to the first, it appears on the whole, subject, however, to future consideration and discussion with the other powers, that the most advisable step to be taken would be, that sufficient explanation should be had with the powers at war with France, in order to enable those not hitherto engaged in the war to propose to that country terms of peace. That these terms should be the withdrawing their arms within the limits of the French territory, the abandoning their conquests, the rescinding any acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nation, and the giving, in some unequivocal manner, a pledge of their intention no longer to foment troubles or to excite disturbances against other governments. In return for these stipulations, the different powers of Europe, who

should be parties to this measure, might engage to abandon all measures or views of hostility against France, or interference in their internal affairs, and to maintain a correspondence and intercourse of amity with the existing powers in that country with whom such a treaty may be concluded. If on the result of this proposal, so made by the powers acting in concert, these terms should not be accepted by France, or being accepted, should not be satisfactorily performed, the different powers might then engage themselves to each other to enter into active measures for the purpose of obtaining the ends in view; and it may be considered whether in such case they might not reasonably look to some indemnity for the expenses and hazards to which they would necessarily be exposed." Such were the principles on which England was willing to have effected a general pacification in Europe; and it will appear in the sequel that these principles, and no others, were constantly maintained by her through the whole contest, and in particular, that the restoration of the Bourbons was never made or proposed as a condition of its termination.—See *Parl. Hist.* xxxiv. 1313, 1314.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 179.

After some time spent in the correspondence, matters were brought to a crisis by the execution of Louis, which took place on January 21, 1793. As there was now no longer even the shadow of a government in the French capital, with whom to maintain a diplomatic intercourse, M. Chauvelin received notice to leave the British dominions within eight days, with a notification, however, that the English government would still listen to terms of accommodation. And on February 3, the French Convention, on the report of Brissot, unanimously declared war against Great Britain (1).

Such is a detailed account of the causes which led to this great and universal war, which speedily embraced all the quarters of the globe, continued, with short interruptions, for more than twenty years, led to the occupation of all the capitals in Europe by foreign armies, and finally brought the Cossacks and the Tartars to the French metropolis. We shall search in vain in any former age of the world, for a contest conducted on so gigantic a scale, or with such general exasperation, in which such extraordinary exertions were made by governments, or such universal enthusiasm manifested by their subjects. Almost all the European history fades into insignificance, when compared to the wars which sprung out of the French Revolution, and the conquests of Marlborough or Turenne are lifeless when placed beside the campaigns of Napoléon.

On coolly reviewing the events which led to the rupture, it cannot be said that any of the European powers were to blame in provoking it. The French government, even if they had possessed the inclination, had not the power to control their subjects, or prevent that communication with the discontented in other states, which excited much alarm in their governments. The Austrians and Prussians had good cause to complain of the infringement of the treaty of Westphalia, by the violent dispossessing of the nobles and clergy in Alsace, and justly apprehended the utmost danger to themselves, from the doctrines which were disseminated in their dominions by the French emissaries. Though last to abandon their system of neutrality, the English were ultimately drawn into the contest, by the alarming principles of foreign interference, which the Jacobins avowed after the 10th August, and the imminent danger in which Holland was placed, by the victorious advance of the French armies to the banks of the Scheldt.

The principle of non-interference with the domestic concerns of other states, perfectly just in the general case, is necessarily subject to some exceptions. No answer has ever been made to the observation of Mr. Burke, "that if my neighbour's house is in flames, and the fire is likely to spread to my own, I am justified in interfering to avert a disaster which promises to be equally fatal to both." If foreign nations are warranted in interposing in extreme cases of tyranny by rulers to their subjects, they must be equally entitled to prevent excessive severity by a people towards their sovereign. The French, who so warmly and justly supported the treaty of July 6, 1827, intended to rescue Greece from Ottoman oppression, who took so active a part against Great-Britain, in the contest with her American colonies, and invaded the Netherlands, and besieged Antwerp in 1832, professedly to preserve the peace of Europe, have no right to complain of the treaty of Pilnitz, which had for its object to rescue the French King from the scaffold, and the French nation from a tyranny which proved worse to themselves than that of Constantinople.

The grounds on which the war was rested by the British government were

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiv. 199.

afterwards fully developed in an important declaration, issued to the commanders of their forces by sea and land on 29th October, 1793, shortly after the execution of the Queen. It was stated in that noble state paper :—" In place of the government has succeeded a system destructive of all public order—maintained by proscriptions, exiles, and confiscations without number—by arbitrary imprisonments, by massacres, which cannot be remembered without horror, and at length by the execrable murder of a just and beneficent sovereign, and of the illustrious princess who, with unshaken firmness, has shared all the misfortunes of her royal consort, his protracted sufferings, his cruel captivity, and ignominious death. The Allies have had to encounter acts of aggression without pretext, open violation of all treaties, unprovoked declarations of war; in a word, whatever corruption, intrigue, or violence could effect, for the purpose, openly avowed, of subverting all the institutions of society, and extending over all the nations of Europe that confusion which has produced the misery of France.

"This state of things cannot exist in France without involving all the surrounding powers in one common danger, without giving them the right—without imposing it upon them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil which exists only by the successive violation of all law and property, and attacks the fundamental principles by which mankind is united in the bonds of civil society. The King will impose no other than equitable and moderate conditions, not such as the expense, the risk, and sacrifices of the war might justify, but such as his Majesty thinks himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring, with a view to these considerations, and still more to that of his own security, and of the future tranquillity of Europe. His Majesty desires nothing more sincerely than thus to terminate a war which he in vain endeavoured to avoid, and all the calamities of which, as now experienced by France, are to be attributed only to the ambition, the perfidy, and the violence of those whose crimes have involved their own country in misery, and disgraced all civilized nations.

"The King promises on his part the suspension of hostilities, friendship, and as far as the course of events will allow, of which the will of man cannot dispose, security and protection to all those who, by declaring for a monarchical form of government, shall shake off the yoke of sanguinary anarchy, of that anarchy which has broken all the most sacred bonds of society, dissolved all the relations of civil life, violated every right, confounded every duty; which uses the name of liberty to exercise the most cruel tyranny, to annihilate all property, seize on all possessions; which founds its power on the pretended consent of the people, and itself carries fire and sword through extensive provinces for having demanded their laws, their religion, and their lawful sovereign." This is real eloquence—this is the true statement of the grounds of the war, in language worthy of the great cause of freedom to which the nation was thenceforward committed, and which was never abandoned till the British armies passed in triumph through the walls of Paris (1).

(1) Ann. Reg. 1793. State Papers, 199. Parl. Hist. xxx. 1597.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1792.

## ARGUMENT.

State of the French Armies at the commencement of the War—Of the Allies—French Invasion of the Low-Countries—Its Defeat—Consequent Consternation at Paris—Allied Armies collect on the Rhine—Invasion of France by the Duke of Brunswick—His line of advance—Surrender of Longwy and Verdun—Movements of Dumouriez—Description of the Argonne Forest—He seizes the Passes before the Prussians—Dilatory motion of the Allies—Clairfait forces one of the Passes—Dumouriez falls back to Ste.-Menehould—Rout of part of the French Army during the Retreat—French take post at Ste.-Menehould—Union of their Armies there—Consternation at Paris and in their Rear—Cannonade of Valmy—French retain their position—Distress of the Allies : they resolve to Retreat—Various motives for this—Terror at Paris—Conferences opened for the Retreat of the Allies—They commence their Retreat, and regain the Rhine—Operations in Flanders—Bombardment of Lille—Raising of the Siege—Movements on the Upper Rhine—Capture of Mayence by Custine—Plans for the Invasion of Flanders—Commenced by Dumouriez—Battle of Jemappes—Tardy advance of Dumouriez—Conquest of Flanders—Jealousy of the General at Paris—Advance of the Republicans to the Scheldt and Meuse—Fall of Antwerp—Of Liège and Namur—Dumouriez puts his Army into winter-quarters—Violent Decree of the Convention, and great revolutionary Changes in Belgium—Cruel Oppression of the People of Flanders by the French—War commenced against Piedmont—Conquest of Savoy and Nice—Threatened Invasion of Switzerland—It is deferred—Measures to Revolutionize Savoy and Nice—They are Incorporated with France—Conclusion of the Campaign on the Upper Rhine—Unsuccessful Operations of the Republicans ; they Recross the Rhine—Immense Results of this Campaign—Precipitance of the Allies—Ruinous Consequences of the want of vigour on their side at first—Great Danger of France at that time—General Reflections on the Campaign.

“PEACE,” says Ségur, “is the dream of the wise : War is the history of man. Youth listens without attention to those who seek to lead it by the paths of reason to happiness ; and rushes with irresistible violence into the arms of the phantom which lures it by the light of glory to destruction (1).” Reason, wisdom, experience, strive in vain to subdue this propensity. For reasons superior to the conclusions of philosophy, its lessons in this particular are unheeded by the generality of mankind ; and whole generations, impelled by an irresistible impulse, fly to their own destruction, and seek, in contending with their fellow-creatures, a vent for the ungovernable passions of their nature. “To overawe or intimidate,” says Mr. Ferguson, “and when we cannot persuade with reason, to resist with fortitude, are the occupations which give its most animating exercise, and its greatest triumphs to a vigorous mind ; and he who has never struggled with his fellow-creatures is a stranger to half the sentiments of mankind (2).”

But we should greatly err if we imagined that this universal and inextinguishable passion is productive only of suffering, and that from the work of mutual destruction no benefit accrues to the future generations of men. It is by these tempests that the seeds of improvement are scattered over the world : that the races of mankind are mingled together, and the energy of Northern character blended with the refinement of Southern civilisation. It is amidst the extremities and dangers of war that antiquated prejudice is

(1) Ségur's Memoirs, ii. 59.

(2) Ferguson, 39, Civil Society.



abandoned, and new ideas disseminated; that invention springs from necessity, and improvement is stimulated by example; and that, by the intermixture of the different races of men, the vices and asperity of each are softened, and the benefits of mutual communication extended. Rome conquered the world by her arms, and humanized it by her example: the Northern conquerors spread amidst the corruption of ancient civilisation the energy of barbarian valour; the Crusades diffused through the Western the knowledge and arts of the Eastern World. The wars which sprung out of the French Revolution, produced effects as great, and benefits as lasting, upon the human species; and amidst their bloody annals may be discerned the rise of principles destined to change the frame of society, and purify the face of the moral world.

State of the French armies. France having decided upon war, directed the formation of three considerable armies. In the North the Marshal Rochambeau commanded forty thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry, cantoned from Dunkirk to Philippeville. In the centre, La Fayette was stationed with forty-five thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry, from Philippeville to Lauter; while Marshal Luckner, with thirty-five thousand infantry and eight thousand cavalry, observed the course of the Rhine from Bale to Lauterburg. In the South, General Montesquieu, with fifty thousand men, was charged with the defence of the line of the Pyrenees and the course of the Rhone. But these armies were formidable only on paper. The agitation and license of the Revolution had loosened the bands of discipline, and the habit of judging and discussing political subjects, destroyed the confidence of the soldiers in their commanders. It might have been foreseen, too, that as soon as the war became defensive, one-half of this force would be required to garrison the triple line of fortresses, which secured the course of the Rhine from foreign aggression (1).

The national enthusiasm, however, speedily produced numerous recruits for the armies. The villages, the hamlets, sent forth their little bands of armed men to swell the forces on the frontier; the roads were covered with battalions of the National Guard, hastening to the scene of action. But public spirit will not supply the want of military organization, nor courage make up the deficiency of discipline. All the early efforts of the French armies were unsuccessful, and had the allies been better prepared for the contest, or even duly improved the advantages they obtained, the war might have been terminated in the first campaign (2).

Allied Forces. To oppose these forces, the Allies had no sufficient armies ready; a sure proof that the military operations contemplated in the treaty of Pilnitz had been abandoned by the contracting powers. Austria and Prussia alone took the field; England was still maintaining a strict neutrality, and the forces of Russia, let loose from the Danube after the treaty of Jassy, were converging slowly towards Poland, the destined theatre of Muscovite ambition. Spain and Piedmont remained at peace. Fifty thousand Prussians were all that could be spared for so distant an operation as the invasion of France; and the Emperor, weakened by his bloody contests with the Turks, could with difficulty muster sixty-five thousand along the whole line of the Rhine, from the lake of Constance to the Dutch frontier. The emigrant corps, assembled in the countries of Treves and Coblenz, and in the margravate of Baden, hardly amounted to seven thousand men, ill fitted, by their rank and habits, for the duties of private soldiers in a fatiguing

(1) *Jom. ii. 3. Toul. ii. 119. Th. ii. 45, 46.*(2) *Toul. ii. 121. Jom. ii. 4.*

campaign, and they were not expected on the Rhine till the end of July (1).

French invasion of the Low-Countries.

Encouraged by the inconsiderable amount of the Austrian forces in the Low-Countries, an invasion of Flanders was attempted by the French. The troops were divided into four columns, destined to unite in the neighbourhood of Brussels, and on the 28th April put in motion; but in every direction they encountered discomfiture and disgrace. General Dillon, who advanced from Lille with four thousand men, was met by a detachment of the garrison of Tournay, and before the Austrians had made a single discharge, or even their cavalry had arrived in the field, the French took to flight, murdered their commander, and re-entered Lille in such confusion as to endanger that important fortress. The corps which advanced from Valenciennes, under the orders of Biron, had no better success; hardly had the cannonade begun on the 29th with the Imperial troops, when two regiments of dragoons fled, exclaiming, "Nous sommes trahis!"

They are defeated.

and speedily drew after them the whole infantry. On the following day, they were attacked by the Austrians under Beaulieu, and on the first onset fled to Valenciennes, exclaiming that they were betrayed, and were only rallied by Rochambeau with the utmost difficulty behind the Ruelle. The corps destined to advance from Dunkirk to Furnes, fell back upon hearing of these disasters, and General La Fayette judged it prudent to suspend the movement of his whole army, and to retire to his camp at Rancennes (2).

Such were the fruits of the insubordination and license which had prevailed in the French armies ever since they revolted against their sovereign—a memorable example to succeeding ages of the extreme peril of soldiers taking upon them the task of politicians, and forgetting their military honour in the fancied discharge of social duties. The revolt of the French guards, the immediate cause of the overthrow of Louis, brought France to the brink of destruction; with a more enterprising or better prepared enemy, the demoralization produced by the first defeats on the frontier, would have proved fatal to the national independence (3). Had Napoléon or Wellington commanded the Austrians in Flanders, the French never would have been permitted to rejoin their colours; and if the Allies had been aware of the wretched state of their opponents, they would have advanced without hesitation to Paris. No reliance can be placed on troops, once the most effective, who have engaged in a revolution, till their discipline has been restored by despotic authority.

The extreme facility with which this invasion of Flanders was repelled, and the disgraceful rout of the French forces produced an extraordinary effect in Europe. The Prussians conceived the utmost contempt for their new opponents, and it is curious to recur to the sentiments expressed by them at the commencement of the war. The military men at Magdeburg deemed the troops of France nothing but an undisciplined rabble: "Do not buy too many horses," said the Minister Bischoffswerder to several officers of rank; "the comedy will not last long; the army of lawyers will soon be annihilated in Belgium, and we shall be on our road home in autumn (4)."

Consternation in consequence at Paris.

The Jacobins and war party in Paris, though extremely disconcerted by the disgrace of their arms, had the address to conceal their apprehensions. They launched forth the thunders of their indignation against the authors of the disasters. Luckner was appointed to

(1) Ann. Reg. 1791, 206. Jom. ii. 4, 5. Th. ii. 79.

(2) Jom. ii. 16, 17. Th. ii. 78, 79, 80. St.-Cyr, i. 47, 48. Introduction. Toul. ii. 121.

(3) Jom. ii. 17.

(4) Hard. i. 357. St.-Cyr, i. 50. Introd.

succeed Rochambeau, who was dismissed, and tribunals were created for the trial of offences against military discipline. The most energetic measures were taken to reinforce the armies, and revive the national spirit, which the recent disasters had much depressed; and Luckner received orders to resume offensive operations (1).

Feeble and irresolute, this old commander was ill qualified to restore the confidence of the army. His first operations were as unsuccessful as those of his predecessor, and he was obliged, after receiving a severe check, to retire in haste to his own frontier. At the same time the advanced guard of La Fayette was surprised and defeated near Maubeuge, and his numerous army thrown into a state of complete discouragement. At that period, it seemed as if the operations of the French generals were dependent upon the absence of their enemies: the moment they appeared they were precipitately abandoned (2).

Meanwhile, the Austrian and Prussian forces were slowly collecting on the frontier. The disgraceful tumult on the 20th June accelerated their movements, and M. Calonne incessantly urged the Allied Sovereigns to advance with rapidity, as the only means of extricating Louis from his perilous situation. The Prussians assembled in the neighbourhood of Coblenz in the middle of June: the disciplined skill of the troops, trained in the school of Potsdam, and the martial air of the Austrians, recently returned from the Turkish campaigns, seemed to promise an easy victory over the tumultary levies of France (3). The disorganization and discouragement of the French armies had arrived at the highest pitch before the invasion commenced, and Frederick-William reckoned at least as much on the feebleness of their defence as on the magnitude of his own forces.

The Duke of Brunswick, who was intrusted with the command of the army, and first took the lead among the generals who combated the French Revolution, was a man of no ordinary capacity. Born in 1733, he was the son of Duke Charles of Brunswick, and his wife the sister of Frederick of Prussia. Early in life he evinced an extraordinary aptitude for the acquisition of knowledge: unhappily the habits of the dissolute court where he was brought up initiated him as rapidly into the vices and pleasures of corrupted life. During the Seven Years' War he was called to more animating duties, and became the companion in arms and friend of the Great Frederick; but the return of peace restored him to inactivity, mistresses, and pleasure. The voluptuous habits, which his marriage, in 1764, to the Princess Augusta, sister of George III, King of England, did not diminish, had no tendency, however, to extinguish the native vigour of his mind. His conversation was brilliant, his knowledge immense, his ideas clear, and delivered with the utmost perspicuity; but, although the vivacity of his imagination made him rapidly perceive the truth, and anticipate all the objections which could be urged against his opinions, it had the effect of rendering him irresolute in conduct and perpetually the prey of apprehensions lest his reputation should be endangered—a peculiarity frequently observable in first-rate men of the second order, but never seen in the master spirits of mankind (4).

Jealous of his military reputation, and of the character which he had acquired of being, after the death of Frederick the Great, the ablest prince in Germany, he was unwilling to hazard both by engaging in the contest with

(1) Jom. ii. 19, 21. Th. ii. 80. Toul. ii. 125.

(2) Th. ii. 80. Jom. ii. 22, 23.

(3) Toul. ii. 211. Jom. ii. 85. St. Cyr, i. 62. Introd.

(4) Mirabeau, Cour de Berlin, i. 231. Hard. i. 347, 351.

revolutionary France, the perils of which he distinctly perceived. Nor were personal motives wanting to confirm him in this opinion. Previous to the commencement of hostilities, the Abbé Sièyes, and the party of philosophers in that country, had cast their eyes on this prince as the chief most capable of directing the Revolution, and at the same time disarming the hostility of Prussia, and they had even entered into secret negotiations with him on that subject. It may easily be imagined with what reluctance the duke entered upon a course of hostilities which at once interrupted such an understanding, and possibly deprived him of the brilliant hope that he might one day be called to the throne of the Bourbons. Impressed with these ideas he addressed a secret memoir to the King of Prussia (1), full of just and equitable views, on the course to be pursued in the approaching invasion, which it would have been well for the allies if they had strictly adhered to during the campaign (2).

In the views entertained at this period by the Prussian cabinet and the Duke of Brunswick, is to be found the true secret of the disasters of the campaign, and one powerful cause of the subsequent calamities which befell every part of Europe. The former were intent on iniquitous gains in Poland, and took the lead in the coalition in France, chiefly in order to gratify the wishes of the Empress Catherine, who was the head of the league for effecting the partition of that ill-fated country, and at the same time vehemently desirous of extinguishing the principles of the Revolution. The latter was apprehensive lest his great reputation, which rested on no permanent or illustrious actions, should be endangered, and his secret views in France blasted by too intemperate an hostility against that country. Thus both the government and the generalissimo were prepared to play false before they entered upon the campaign—they intended only to make a show of hostility on the Rhine, sufficient to propitiate the Semiramis of the North, and incline her to allow them as large a share as possible of the contemplated booty on the Vistula. Frederick-William, indeed, was sincere in his desire to deliver the King of France and re-establish monarchical authority in his dominions, but, surrounded by ministers who had different objects in view, he was unable to act with the energy requisite to ensure success, nor was he aware of the difficulties to be encountered in its prosecution. The Duke of Brunswick alone was adequately impressed with the serious dangers which attended the proposed invasion, and in his memoir, already mentioned, strongly urged the necessity of "immediate and decisive operations, the more so as, without them, consequences of incalculable importance may ensue; for the French are in such a state of effervescence, that, if not defeated in the outset, they may become capable of the most extraordinary resolutions (3)."

Dumouriez, minister of foreign affairs at Paris, aware that Austria was totally unprepared for a war in the Low-Countries, and strongly impressed with the idea that the real object of France should be to wrest these opulent provinces from the House of Hapsburg, counselled an immediate advance into Flanders; while at the same time, by means of secret agents, he prepared

(1) "You will understand better than I what an important effect the disposition of the interior of France must have on the operations of the campaign. It would be well to address a proclamation to the National Guards, announcing that we do not make war on the nation, that we have no intention of abridging their liberties, that we do not desire to overturn their constitution; but that we insist only for reparation to the German princes dispossessed in Alsace. That affair of the indemnities will occasion the greatest embarrassment, if we cannot pre-

vail on the Emperor to give his consent to the changes which are commencing in Poland. For my own part, I give to acquisitions in Poland a decided preference to any that may be acquired in France; for by any attempt at territorial aggrandisement in that country, the whole spirit in which the war should be conducted will be changed."—*Mém.* 19th Feb. 1792.—*HARD.* i. 353.

(2) *HARD.* i. 349, 353.

(3) *HARD.* i. 353, 357.

the minds of the discontented, both in that country and in Piedmont, to second the invasion of the Republicans. Aware of the intrigues which M. Sémonville, the French envoy, was carrying forward, the King of Sardinia refused to permit him to advance beyond Alexandria. Dumouriez affected the utmost indignation at this slight put upon "the great nation" in the person of its plenipotentiary; but the cabinet of Turin remained firm, and refused either to admit M. Sémonville to the court, or make any submission to the indignant feelings of the Republicans (1).

After much deliberation it was resolved to attempt the invasion by the plains of Champagne, the same quarter where an irruption was afterwards successfully achieved by the Allies in 1814. Great difficulties were experienced in regard to the corps of emigrants, which, from the want of any aid either from Prussia or Austria, had not yet attained any consistent military organization; as, on the one hand, the Allies were apprehensive of exciting the nation by the sight of an armed invasion of the emigrant noblesse, while, on the other, the influence of those illustrious exiles especially with the northern courts, rendered it an imprudent measure to give them any serious ground of complaint. At length a middle course was resolved on, to join the emigrant corps to the army, but keep it in reserve with the second line—a resolution which, how unhappy soever, was rendered unavoidable by the arrival of a courier from St.-Petersburg, bringing despatches, containing not only the entire concurrence of the Empress Catherine in the proposed hostile operation, but her resolution not to permit any change in the form of government in any European state—a declaration which (2), under the veil of

May 3, 1793.

a general principle not likely to be disputed in despotic courts, concealed her secret design to make the recent changes in the Polish constitution a pretext for completing the partition of the Sarmatian plains.

The partitioning powers at length spoke openly out. On the 8th June, Frederick-William, in concert with the Empress Catherine, replied to the King of Poland, that he entirely disapproved of the revolution so lately effected in the Polish dominions, and that nothing but an immediate invasion by the Russian and Prussian forces could be anticipated from such a step taken without their concurrence. At the same time twenty-five thousand men, under Marshal Moellendorf, received orders to advance towards Warsaw. Thus, at the time when a cordial alliance of all the European powers was imperatively called for to stem the torrent of the French Revolution, the seeds of weakness and disunion were already sown, from their unjustifiable projects of aggrandizement on the shores of the Vistula (3).

Meanwhile the King of France, not venturing openly to communicate with the Allied Sovereigns, dispatched a secret envoy to Vienna with letters to Marshal Castries, whom he had selected to communicate between him and the exiled princes, containing the wisest and most salutary advice on the conduct to be pursued by the invading powers (4). These instructions were

(1) Hard. i. 357, 360.

(2) Hard. i. 360, 363.

(3) Hard. i. 363, 369.

(4) "The safety of the monarchy," said Louis, "that of the King and all his family, the general security of persons and property, the stability of the order which may eventually succeed to the present confusion, the urgent necessity of abridging the duration of the crisis, and weakening the agitating powers,—all concur in recommending the views of his Majesty to all true Royalists. He fears, with reason, that a foreign invasion will induce a civil war in the interior, or rather a frightful *Jacquerie* ;

that is the object of his greatest apprehension. He ardently desires, in order to prevent the calamities, of which you appear to discard too lightly the consideration, that the emigrants should take no part in the approaching hostilities; that they should consult the interests of the King, of the state, of their properties, and of all the Royalists in the interior, rather than their just resentment; and that, after having disarmed crime by their victories, and dissolved a fanatical league by depriving it of its means of resistance, they may, by a salutary revolution, prepare the way for a treaty of peace, in which the King and the Foreign Powers may be the

received, and deliberately considered by the Allied cabinets. They were strongly impressed at the time with the justice of his views, and gave the most solemn assurances to the envoy, Mallet du Pan, that their measures should be entirely regulated by them; but the advice was forgotten almost as soon as it was received, and the more intemperate wishes of the exiled princes subsequently gained too great an ascendancy over the measures of the coalition (1).

On the 25th July the King of Prussia joined the army, and on the same day the proclamation was issued, which has been already given in the civil history of France, and which had so powerful an effect in exciting the patriotism and healing the divisions of the French people. This proclamation, though signed by the Duke of Brunswick, was drawn up by M. Calonne and the Marquis Lemon, in more violent terms than was originally intended, or than was consistent with the objects of the war, as set forth in the previous official declaration of the Prussian cabinet (2), in consequence of the intelligence which the Allied Powers had received of the secret offers made to the Duke by the constitutional party in France, and the necessity which they thence conceived there was of committing him irrevocably against the Revolution. The objectionable passages were introduced against his will by the direct authority of the Emperor and King of Prussia; and so strongly impressed was the Duke of Brunswick with the unhappy consequences likely to arise from the publication of such a manifesto, that he tore to pieces the first copy brought to him for his signature, and ever after called it, "that deplorable manifesto." Certain it is, that if issued at all, it should only have been at the gates of Paris, and after decisive success in the field; and that to publish it at the outset merely of feeble and languid military operations, was the height of imprudence (3).

Invasion of  
France.  
July 30,  
1792.

On the 30th, the whole army broke up and entered the French territory. The Allied army consisted of fifty thousand Prussians, in the finest condition, and supported by an unusually large train both of heavy and field artillery; forty-five thousand Austrians, the greater part of whom were veterans from the Turkish wars; ten thousand Hessians, and upwards of six thousand French emigrants, dispersed by a most injudicious arrangement into separate corps. In all, a hundred and thirteen thousand men: a formidable army, both from its numerical force and its warlike qualities, but hardly adequate to so great an undertaking as that of conquering France (4).

The French armies destined to oppose this invasion, were by no means equal, either in discipline or equipment, to their antagonists; and they were soon paralysed by intestine divisions. The army of La Fayette, now not more than twenty-eight thousand strong, was posted in the neighbourhood of Sedan; Beurnonville between Maubeuge and Lille, with thirty thousand;

arbiters of the destinies and laws of the nation."—*Instructions of Louis XVI to Duc de Castries*—HARD. i. 402, 404.

(1) Hard. i. 402, 421.

(2) "There is no power," said the Prussian manifesto, "interested in the balance of power in Europe, which can behold with unconcern that great kingdom become a prey to anarchical horrors, which have in a manner annihilated its political existence; [Mr. Burke was of the same opinion. "We may regard France," said he, "as now nearly blotted out from the political map of Europe."]—*Speech in House of Commons, 9th Feb. 1790*—WOLFE, v. 5, 6.] there is no true Frenchman who must not desire to

see such disorders terminated. To put a period to the anarchy in France, to establish with that view legal power on the base of monarchical authority, to secure by this means the other powers from the incendiary efforts of a frantic Jacobin band,—such are the objects which the King, in conjunction with his ally, proposes to himself in this noble enterprise, not only with the general concurrence of the powers of Europe, who recognise its justice and necessity, but with the approbation and well-wishes of every friend to the human race."—HARD. i. 425, 426.

(3) Hard. i. 427, 432.

(4) Compare *Jom. ii. 4*; and *Toul. ii. 266*. *Ann. Reg. xxxv. 45*. *Jom. ii. 86, 87*; and *Hard. i.*

Kellermann, with twenty thousand, at Metz; Custine at Landau, with fifteen thousand; and Biron in Alsace, with thirty thousand :—in all, a hundred and twenty-three thousand men, but extremely defective both in discipline and subordination. Above twelve thousand of their officers had joined the ranks of the emigrants, and those selected to supply their place had as yet no experience in the military art. But the revolution of the 10th August changed the command of the armies, and ultimately proved fatal to the Allies, not less from the energy which it imparted to the government, than the ability which it brought to the head of military affairs. La Fayette, having in vain endeavoured to raise the standard of revolt against the Jacobins, was compelled to fly for safety to the Austrian lines; and Luckner, having disobeyed the Convention, the command of both their armies was intrusted to Dumouriez; a man whose ardent spirit, indefatigable activity, and boundless resources, were peculiarly fitted to rescue France from the perilous situation in which it was placed (1).

Line of advance adopted by the Allies. A triple barrier defends France from invasion on its eastern frontier. The centre of this line, where an attack was threatened from the Allied forces, is covered by Thionville, Bitsch, Sarrelouis, Longwy, and Montmédy, in front; and Metz, Verdun, Sedan, and Mézières in the rear; while the woody heights of the Ardennes forest, occupying a space of fifteen leagues between Verdun and Sedan, offers the most serious obstacles to the passage of an army. It was by this line that the Allies resolved to invade France; as it was then supposed, what experience has since proved to be true, that a force of not less than two hundred and fifty thousand men would be requisite to make a successful irruption from the side of Switzerland or Flanders. Every thing seemed to announce success, and tended to recommend the most vigorous measures in seizing it. The French armies, scattered over an immense line, from the Alps to the ocean, were incapable of uniting for any common operation; and their state of disorganization was such, as to render it extremely doubtful whether they were either disposed or qualified to combine for effecting it (2).

Three fortresses only lay on their road; Sedan, Longwy, and Verdun—all in a wretched state of defence; after which the army had nothing but a fertile plain to traverse on the road to Paris. In these circumstances, a powerful and rapid attack on the centre seemed the most prudent, as well as the most effectual, means of dispersing the forces of the Revolution, and reaching the heart of their power, before any effective array could be collected for its defence. There can be no question of the wisdom of the plan of operations; but the Allies were grievously mistaken in the degree of vigour required for carrying it into execution (3).

The invading army advanced with slowness, and apparent timidity, in a country which they professed to consider as the theatre of certain conquest.

Longwy surrenders. Aug. 23. At length, after an inexplicable delay, the fortress of Longwy was invested on the 20th August; and a bombardment having been immediately commenced, the garrison, who were partly composed of volunteers, and divided in opinion, capitulated on the 23d. At the same time, intelligence was received of the flight of La Fayette from the army which he commanded, and that he had sought refuge from the violence of his soldiers within the Austrian lines. Every thing seemed to announce success; and if the Duke of Brunswick, taking advantage of the consternation of the moment,

(1) Jom. i. 104. Th. iii. 37, 39. St.-Cyr, i. 39.

(2) Jom. ii. 86. Toul. ii. 295.

(3) Jom. i. 90, 91. Th. iii. 40.

had fallen with the bulk of his forces upon the army round Sedan, now destitute of a commander, there can be no doubt that a blow might have been struck which would have spread such consternation among the revolutionary party, as would have led to the rapid termination of the war. Instead of doing so, however, the Allied army, following the preconceived plan of operation, advanced on the great road, and, after an unaccountable delay of six days around Longwy, moved forward on the 29th, and on the 30th invested Verdun. On the 2d September this important fortress capitulated after a feeble resistance (1); and there now remained no fortified place in a state of defence on the road to Paris (2).

And Verdun.  
Sept. 2.

After such extraordinary and un hoped-for good fortune as the capitulation of the only fortresses which lay on their road, after an investment of a few days each, it was difficult to account either for the present inactivity or ultimate disasters of the Allied army. The army round Sedan, now under the command of Dumouriez, did not exceed 25,000 men, little more than a fourth part of the Duke of Brunswick's force; and yet the other armies were so far distant, that on it almost exclusively depended the salvation of France (3). But the dilatory conduct of the Allies, joined to the enterprise and genius of Dumouriez, paralysed all these advantages. Nothing could rouse the Duke of Brunswick from his dilatory system, not even the urgent representations of the King of Prussia, who longed for decisive operations (4).

Every thing depended upon the immediate occupation of the defiles of the Argonne forest, the only remaining barrier between a victorious army of eighty thousand men and the capital. These wooded heights were only six leagues in advance of the Allies, and it was of the last importance to reach them before the enemy; for if once the war was carried into the plains beyond, there was little hope that the ill-disciplined troops of France would be able to withstand the numerous and highly disciplined cavalry of the Prussians. The eagle eye of Dumouriez speedily pitched on the sole defensible point, and, placing his hand on the Argonne forest in the map,—“There,” said he, “is the Thermopylæ of France: if I have the good fortune to arrive there before the Prussians, all is saved.” His determination was instantly taken; but it appears that the movement to the Argonne forest had been previously recommended by the Executive Council of Paris, and that he had only delayed executing it from an opinion, that the Allies would be detained several weeks before Longwy and Verdun, and that the best way of arresting their march was to threaten an invasion of the Low-Countries (5).

(1) Th. iii. 42, 98. Join. i. 101, 102.

(2) In the course of the march the King of Prussia met a young soldier with his knapsack on his back and an old musket in his hands. “Where are you going?” said the King. “To fight,” replied the soldier. “By that answer,” replied the monarch, “I recognise the noblesse of France.” He saluted him, and passed on. The soldier's name has since become immortal; it was FRANÇOIS DE CHATEAUBRIAND, then returning from his travels in North America to share in the dangers of the throne in his native country.—See CHATEAUBRIAND, *Memoirs*, 83, *Fragments*.

(3) Tou. ii. 297, 298. Dum. ii. 337. Th. iii. 48.

(4) The advantages which lay open to the invading army at this juncture, are thus set forth by the person of all others best qualified to appreciate them—General Dumouriez. “How did it happen,” says he, “that, after the fall of Longwy on the 23d August, the enemy did not instantly resolve to march on Stenay and Monzow, and there annihilate the French army, or draw over the troops of the

line to their side, in the perplexity in which they were after the dethronement of the King? Nothing is more certain than that, if they had done so, the French army would have disbanded; nay, there is reason to believe, that if some of the popular officers of the old *régime* had presented themselves at the advanced posts, a great part of the troops of the line, especially the cavalry, would have joined the Allied army.

“When you are about to invade a country torn by a revolution, when you know that you may rely on a large party in its bosom, when you would deliver a king in fetters, it should be a fixed principle, especially with a large army, to multiply your forces by a rapidity of movement, and arrive like a clap of thunder at the capital, without giving the people time to recover from their consternation. After Longwy was taken, if the army at Sedan had been dispersed, no obstacles remained, either to the prosecution of a methodical campaign, or an immediate march to Paris.”—DUMOURIEZ, iii. 32.

(5) Dum. ii. 391. Th. iii. 88, 89. Tou. ii. 390.



Description  
of the  
Argonne  
Forest.

The forest of Argonne is a wooded ridge, extending from the neighbourhood of Sedan, in a south-westerly direction, about thirteen leagues. Its breadth varies from one to four leagues. Five roads traverse it, leading into the rich and fertile districts of Eveches from the open and sandy plains of Champagne. The great road to Paris goes by the pass of Islettes: the other passes were named Grandpré, Chêne-Populeux, Croix-au-Bois, and Chalade. These roads required to be occupied and guarded before they were reached by the enemy; a perilous operation, as it involved a flank movement directly in front of a vastly superior hostile army. The ruinous effect of the delay round Longwy, after the fall of that fortress, was now apparent: had the Allied forces moved on, instead of there waiting a week in inactivity, the war would have been carried into the plains of Champagne, and the broken ground passed before the French army could possibly have arrived (1).

Dumouriez  
seizes the  
passes of the  
forest.

Clairfait, with the advanced guard of the Allies, was, on the 30th August, only six leagues from Islettes, the principal passage through the forest of Argonne; while the nearest posts of the French, commanded by Dillon, were distant ten leagues; and the nearest road to reach it lay directly in front of the Austrian vanguard. Determined, however, at all hazards, to gain the passes, Dumouriez, on the 31st, took the bold resolution of pushing on directly across the Austrian vanguard. This resolution was entirely successful: the Austrians, ignorant of his designs, and intent only on covering the siege of Verdun, which was going forward, withdrew their advanced posts, and allowed the French to pass; and from the 1st to the 4th September, the whole army defiled within sight almost of their videttes, and occupied the passes; Dumouriez himself taking his station at Grandpré, near the centre, with thirteen thousand men. He immediately fortified the position, and awaited in tranquillity the reinforcements which he expected from the interior, the army of the centre, and that of the north. They were very considerable, for Beurnonville and Duval were hastening from the army of Flanders with sixteen thousand men; while Kellermann, with twenty-two thousand, was expected in a few days from the neighbourhood of Metz. Large bodies were also advancing from Paris, where the Republican government was taking the most energetic measures for the public defence. Camps for the recruits were formed at Soissons, Meaux, Reims, and Châlons, where numerous volunteers were daily arriving, animated with the greatest enthusiasm; while the sanguinary despots of Paris marched off thousands of citizens, reeking with the blood of the massacres in the prisons, to more honourable combats on the frontier. The whole reinforcements from the interior were ordered to assemble at Ste.-Menehould, a little in the rear of the position of the army. The camp of the French general himself at Grandpré was one of uncommon strength. A succession of heights, placed in the form of an amphitheatre, formed the ground on which the army was placed: at their feet vast meadows stretched forth, in the midst of which the Aisne flowed in a deep stream, forming a valuable cover to the front of the camp. Two bridges only were thrown over the river, each of which was guarded by a strong advanced body. The enemy would thus be under the necessity of crossing the Aisne without the aid of bridges, traversing a wide extent of meadow, under the concentric fire of numerous batteries, and finally scaling a rugged ridge broken by woods, strengthened by intrenchments, and almost inaccessible. Confident in the strength of this position, Dumouriez wrote to

(1) Jom. ii. 109. Toul. ii. 300. Thi. iii. 90.

the minister of war in these terms:—"Verdun is taken: I am in hourly expectation of the Prussians: the camp at Grandpré and Islettes are the Thermopylæ of France; but I shall be more successful than Leonidas (1)."

Dilatory motions of the Allies. While these energetic measures were going forward on the French side, the steps of the Allies, notwithstanding their extraordinary good fortune, were marked by that indecision, which, in a war of invasion, is the sure forerunner of defeat. It was evident from the position of the French army, and the numerous reinforcements hastening to them from every quarter, that every thing depended upon forcing the passes, and throwing them into confusion before their forces were augmented, or the moral energy acquired, which, in war, is even more important than numerical strength. Instead of this, their movements were unaccountably tardy, as if they wished to give the French time to collect their forces before any decisive operations were commenced. Though Verdun capitulated on the second September, the army did not advance till the 5th, when it remained in position on the heights of Fromerville till the 11th, wasting in inactivity the most precious days of the campaign. At length, being informed of the occupation of the passes by Dumouriez, and having completed his preparations, the Duke of Brunswick, on the 12th, moved a part of his forces to Landres, and remained there in perfect inactivity till the 17th, threatening the left of the French position (2).

Clairfait seizes the pass of Croix-au-Bois. To oppose this movement, Dumouriez withdrew a considerable part of the forces which occupied the pass of Croix au Bois, one of the five which traversed the forest of Argonne, and was situated on the right of the line, to support the left, where an attack was anticipated. The consequence was, that, on the 12th, Clairfait established himself in that important post, and thus broke the French line, and threatened to take it in rear. Sensible of his error, the French general detached general Chazot to retake the position; but Clairfait not only maintained his ground, but threw back his opponents from the central corps of the army, and entirely turned 15th Sept. the right of the French position. The situation of Dumouriez was now highly critical; his force in the central camp at Grandpré did not exceed sixteen thousand men, while the whole Prussian army was in front, and the Austrians under Clairfait were rapidly defiling into his rear. To complete his misfortunes, Kellermann, whose march from Metz had been unaccountably slow, had not yet arrived; and it was evident that he could not effect a junction but in the rear of the position in the Argonne forest (3); while the detachment intrusted with the defence of the pass of Chêne-Populeux, unable to resist the attacks of the Austrians, abandoned their position, and fell back towards Chalons. "Never," says Dumouriez, "was the situation of an army more desperate: France was within a hair-breadth of destruction."

Retreat of Dumouriez to Ste-Menehould. In this extremity the French general resolved to evacuate entirely the line of the Argonne forest, and to fall back with all his forces to the position of Ste-Menehould, a few leagues in his rear. Every thing depended upon gaining time: the heavy rains were already commencing, which promised to render a farther advance of the Allies extremely difficult, if not impracticable. The camp, in consequence, was raised at midnight, on the 15th; and on the 17th the whole army was collected in the rear, at Ste.-Menehould, where he resolved to remain firm till the expected reinforcements arrived. His forces did not exceed twenty-five thousand men;

(1) Dum. ii. 394, 396; iii. 2. Toul. ii. 301. Jom. ii. 110, 111. Th. ii. 93, 94. St.-Cyr, i. 66. Introd. ii. 120, 121. Th. iii. 101, 102.  
(2) Jom. ii. 115, 118. St.-Cyr, i. 67. Introd.  
(3) Dum. iii. 20, 21, 23. St.-Cyr, i. 67, 69. Jom.

but their position was defended by a numerous and excellent artillery: while the reinforcements, which were daily expected promised to raise it to seventy thousand combatants (1).

Rout of part of the French army. During the retreat, however, an incident occurred which had well-nigh brought destruction on the whole army. General Chazot, who commanded the rear-guard of ten thousand men, was attacked at Vaux by fifteen hundred Prussian hussars, and four pieces of horse artillery. The French troops instantly took to flight, disbanded themselves, rushed through the main body in the utmost confusion, and numbers fled as far as

Sept. 17. Reims and Paris in the most dreadful alarm. But for the exertions of General Duval, who succeeded in reorganizing part of the rear-guard, and of General Miranda, who restored order in the main body, the whole column would have been irretrievably routed. But the Prussian cavalry, not being supported, were at length obliged to retire, astonished at their easy success, and lamenting that so favourable an opportunity had been lost of destroying the French army. Many of the French troops fled thirty leagues and upwards from the field of battle, spreading consternation wherever they went, and declaring that all was lost. At six in the evening, after the troops had taken up their ground near Dammartin, a new panic seized the troops: the artillerymen, in haste, harnessed their horses to escape beyond the little river Bionne, and all the camp was in confusion. At length some degree of order was restored, by the dragoons in the general's escort striking the fugitives with the flats of their sabres; great fires were lighted, and the army rested in groups round them without any distinction or order (2).

"I have been obliged," said Dumouriez, in his letter to the Convention, "to return from the camp of Grandpré; during the retreat, an accountable panic seized the army; ten thousand men fled from fifteen hundred Prussian hussars; the loss did not amount to fifty men; every thing is repaired, and-I answer for the safety of France." But he was far from feeling, in reality, the confidence which these words seemed to indicate. The rout of so large a portion of his forces, demonstrated how little reliance was to be placed in his undisciplined levies, when performing movements in presence of a numerous and warlike enemy. He resolved, in consequence, to make the war one of positions, and to inspire his troops with fresh confidence by placing them behind unattackable intrenchments (3).

The position of the new camp which he selected, was well calculated to effect these objects. Placed on a rising ground, in the centre of a large and open valley, it commanded all the country around; the centre of the army, under the command of Dumouriez, faced towards Champagne, while the corps of Dillon was stationed on the road leading from Verdun, and still held the passes of Islettes and Chalade, through which the principal road to Paris was conducted. A numerous artillery defended all the avenues to the camp, and water was to be had in abundance from the river Aisne, which bounded its right side. In this position the French general anxiously awaited the arrival of the expected reinforcement (4).

Dumouriez takes post at Ste.-Menehould. Sept. 18. Terrified at the reports which they received of the rout at Vaux, Kellermann and Beurnonville retired, when almost close to the camp of Ste.-Menehould, the former to Vitry, the latter to Châlons. They would have been irretrievably separated, if the Allies had showed the

Union of the French armies. Sept. 19.

(1) Jom. ii. 123. Dum. iii. 33. St.-Cyr, i. 69. 70. *Introd.*

(2) St.-Cyr, i. 71. *Introd.* Th. iii. 104, 105. Dum. iii. 30, 31. Jom. ii. 123.

(3) Dum. iii. 34. Th. iii. 106, 107.

(4) Dum. iii. 35, 36. Th. iii. 106, 107.

least vigour in improving their advantages. But their extraordinary delay gave Dumouriez time to reiterate his orders for an immediate junction, and at length, on the 19th, the whole three armies were united in the neighbourhood of Ste.-Menehould. The orders to Beurnonville were carried by an aide-de-camp of Dumouriez, named MACDONALD, afterwards Duke of Tarente, and victor of the field of Wagram (1).

Their arrival totally changed the state of affairs. The spirit of the French soldiers was prodigiously elated by so great an accession of strength. It was no longer a corps of twenty-five thousand who maintained an unequal struggle with eighty thousand enemies, but a great army, seventy thousand strong, which sought to measure its strength with the invaders.

Consternation in the rear of the French.

Meanwhile, disorder and dismay prevailed in the rear of the French position. The fugitives from Vaux, who fled almost thirty leagues into the interior, declared every where that the army was destroyed, that Dumouriez was a traitor, and that all was lost. The national guard and gendarmerie at Reims, Soissons, and Châlons, were seized by the same spirit; pillage became universal; the corps disbanded, and wreaked their disappointment on their own officers, many of whom they put to death. Such was the general consternation, that the people of Paris began to despair of the republic, and hesitation became visible in the new levies who were daily forwarded from its gates to the frontier (2).

The troops of Beurnonville, which arrived first, were stationed at Sainte-Cohiers. When those of Kellermann came up, Dumouriez ordered them to encamp between Dampierre and Elise, behind the river Aube; and, as an attack from the enemy was anticipated, to advance in that event to the heights of VALMY. Kellermann conceived the order to mean, that he should take post there from the first, and accordingly occupied the heights with all his artillery and baggage, and began to erect his tents. The confusion occasioned by their arrival attracted the attention of the Prussians, who had arrived on the opposite heights of La Lune, and led to an action, inconsiderable in itself, but most important in the consequences to which it led (3).

The Duke of Brunswick, hearing of the departure of Dumouriez from the camp at Grandpré, at length put his troops in motion, passed the now unguarded defiles of the forest, and on the 18th crossed the Aube, and advanced between the French army and Paris. By this bold movement, he hoped to cut off the enemy from their resources, and compel them either to abandon the capital or surrender (4). In this way the hostile armies were placed in the most singular position; the Prussians faced towards the Rhine, and had their back to Champagne, while Dumouriez, with his rear at the forest of Argonne, faced towards the French capital.

Cannonade of Valmy, Sept. 26.

Arrived on the heights of La Lune, on the morning of the 20th, in a thick haze, the Prussians, when the vapours cleared away, perceived the French opposite to them on the heights of Valmy. A cannonade immediately commenced: Dumouriez, perceiving that it was too late to draw Kellermann back to the camp originally assigned to him, immediately detached nine battalions, and eight squadrons, under General Chazot, to his support, while General Steingel was placed, with sixteen battalions, on a height which commanded the position of Valmy on the right (5).

The Duke of Brunswick formed his army in three columns, and seemed disposed to commence an attack by the oblique method, the favourite mode

(1) Dum. iii. 37. Jom. ii. 124. Th. iii. 109.  
(2) Toul. ii. 322. Th. iii. 110. Dum. iii. 39.  
St.-Cyr, i. 74, 75, Intro.

(3) Dum. iii. 41.  
(4) Jom. ii. 124. Th. ii. 115. Toul. ii. 324.  
(5) Toul. ii. 330. Dum. iii. 41.

at that time in the Prussian forces. An accidental explosion of some ammunition waggons, near the mill of Valmy, occasioned a momentary disorder in the French army, and, if followed by a vigorous attack, would probably have led to a total defeat. But the powerful fire of the French artillery, and the energetic conduct of Kellermann, and the steady front exhibited by his troops, disconcerted the Prussians, and induced the Duke to hesitate in engaging his troops in a general action. The affair terminated in a vigorous cannonade on both sides, and the superb columns of the Prussians were drawn off at night without having fired a shot. Kellermann bivouacked after the action, on the heights of Valmy, and the Prussians on those of La Lune (1), barring the great road to Châlons, and still between Dumouriez and Paris.

It is with an invading army as with an insurrection; an indecisive action is equivalent to a defeat. The affair of Valmy was merely a cannonade; the total loss on both sides did not exceed eight hundred men; the bulk of the forces on neither were drawn out; yet it produced upon the invaders consequences equivalent to the most terrible overthrow. The Duke of Brunswick no longer ventured to despise an enemy who had shown so much steadiness under a severe fire of artillery; the elevation of victory, the self-confidence which ensures it, had passed over to the other side. Gifted with an uncommon degree of intelligence, and influenced by an ardent imagination, the French soldiers are easily depressed by defeat, but proportionally raised by success; they rapidly make the transition from one state of feeling to the other. From the cannonade at Valmy may be dated the commencement of the career of victory which carried their armies to Vienna and the Kremlin (2).

After the action, Kellermann was withdrawn from the heights of Valmy to the ground originally assigned him in the intrenched camp, while the Prussians strengthened themselves in their position on the heights of La Lune, still covering the great road to Châlons and Paris. The Executive Council evinced great disquietude at the situation of the armies, and urged Dumouriez to change his ground for such a position as might cover Châlons, Meaux, and Reims, which were threatened by the enemy's light troops. He replied, with the firmness of a great general that he would maintain his present position; and, so far from detaching forces to cover Châlons (3), he gave orders for the troops which were collecting there to advance nearer to the scene of action. The position of Islettes was still preserved; and an attack, by a detachment of the Allies, on that important pass, was defeated by the obstinate resistance of the officer in command.

The conduct of the Duke of Brunswick, both in this action, and the movements for three weeks which had preceded it, would be altogether inexplicable, if the external aspect of the military events alone was considered. But the truth was, as has at length been revealed, that during all this period, a secret negotiation was in dependence between him and Dumouriez, the object of which was to obtain, after a little delay, the recognition of the constitutional throne by the latter, and the junction of his army to the invading force. This negotiation was skilfully conducted by the French general, who constantly held out that he was in reality favourable to the King and the Constitution, and would show himself as such when the proper time arrived; but that, in order to do so with effect, it was necessary to wait for the arrival of the other corps d'armée, as without an imposing force such a declaration

(1) Dum. ii. 44, 45. Jom. ii. 131. Toul. ii. 330, 331. Th. iii. 112, 113.

(2) Toul. ii. 334. Jom. ii. 131. Th. iii. 113. Dum. iii. 44. Harl. i. 478, 479.

(3) Jom. ii. 133. Dum. iii. 44, 47. Th. iii. 116, 117. Anu. Reg. xxxiii. 30.

would not be attended with the desired effect at Paris, and that any disaster in the mean-time would put an end to all his designs. By these plausible but insidious communications, Dumouriez gained time to retire from the Argonne forest to Ste.-Menehould without molestation, and completely paralysed his antagonist, till the arrival of the expected reinforcements put him in a situation to throw off the mask and openly resist the Allied arms (1).

The same secret negotiation, which had already arrested their movements, restrained the Prussian arms on the field of Valmy; the Duke of Brunswick was fearful, by a decided action and probable victory, of converting a promised ally into a decided opponent (2). No sooner was the cannonade concluded than the interchange of secret messengers became more active than ever. Lombard, private secretary to the duke, suffered himself to be made prisoner in disguise by the French patrols, and conducted the negotiation. The Duke insisted on the immediate liberation of the King, and re-establishment of a constitutional monarchy; while the French general avowed that these were the objects which he really cherished at the bottom of his heart, but that, in order to carry these intentions into effect with any prospect of success, it was indispensable, in the first place, that the allies should retire and evacuate the French territory; that their doing so would give him so much influence that he had no doubt of being able to achieve these desirable objects, and that he pledged his word of honour to do so: but that, if these terms were resisted, he would exert all the means in his power to destroy the invaders, which his present situation, at the head of a hundred thousand men, enabled him to effect without difficulty, and that the necessary effect of such a continuance of the contest would be the destruction of the King and the royal family, whose lives were already menaced by the anarchical faction who held the reins of power at Paris (3).

These representations of Dumouriez made a great impression at the Allied headquarters. The danger to the King's person was evident, from the violence of the Jacobins, and the frightful massacre in the prisons which had already taken place. The conduct of the Republicans, under the cannonade of Valmy, had demonstrated that their troops could at least stand fire, and were not disposed to join the invaders; circumstances which, in the most favourable view, presaged a severe and bloody contest before the war was brought to a successful issue. It seemed foreign to the interests of Prussia to risk its sovereign and the flower of its army by a further advance into France, in pursuance of objects in which it had no immediate or peculiar interest, and which, if too warmly pursued, would probably divert the national forces from the side of Poland, where real acquisitions for the monarchy were to be obtained. These considerations were strongly urged upon the King by his council and the Duke of Brunswick, who had not altogether lost hopes that brilliant prospects still awaited him from the triumph of the liberal party in France. But the King steadily resisted, and, inflamed by military ardour and a generous desire to save the august captives at Paris, strongly urged an immediate advance to the capital (4).

The negotiation, however, still continued. The King of Prussia offered terms on which he was willing immediately to evacuate the French terri-

(1) Hard. i. 471.

(2) This was openly alluded to in the Prussian official despatch giving an account of the battle.

"From the general to the lowest soldier the most enthusiastic spirit animated the army, and it would

undoubtedly have gained a glorious victory, if considerations of a still higher kind had not prevented the King from giving battle.—Hard. i. 482.

(3) Hard. i. 486, 487.

(4) Hard. i. 486, 494.

tory (1); but, in answer, he received a bulletin, containing the decree of the Assembly abolishing royalty in France, and converting the kingdom into a Republic. Filled with consternation at this intelligence, the Prussian envoys returned mournfully to their camp; and Dumouriez artfully took advantage of the general alarm, to represent that he was as much distressed as any one at the turn affairs had taken at Paris; that the Republican party was now triumphant, and could be overthrown only by the restoration of calmer ideas on the return of peace; but that nothing could be more certain, than that any further advance of the invaders would involve in instantaneous ruin the King, the royal family, and the whole nobility, and render utterly hopeless the restoration of legitimate authority (2).

While skilfully making use of these painful and too probable considerations to paralyse the Allied armies, and cause them to waste the precious moments in fruitless negotiations, Dumouriez apprised the government at Paris of all that was going forward, and informed them, that he was satisfied that the distress was very great in their army, and that, by a little further firmness on his part, they would be driven to a disastrous retreat (3). At the same time, he wrote a long memorial to the King of Prussia, in which he adduced every argument calculated to shake his resolution to advance further, and insisted, in an especial manner, on the danger to which it would expose the King of France (4).

Frederick-William, however, remained firm; neither the strong representations of his generals, as to the danger of his army, nor the still more pressing perils of the King of France, could shake his resolution. At a council of war, held at headquarters on the 27th of September, at which the ministers of Austria and Russia assisted, it was resolved to advance and give battle on the 29th. But before this resolution could be carried into execution, intelligence was received, which gave the numerous party in the Prussian cabinet, Sept. 25, 1792. who longed for peace, the ascendant. A decree of the Committee of Public Safety was brought to headquarters, in which it had been unanimously resolved to enter into no negotiation until the Prussian troops had entirely evacuated the French territory. Advices at the same time arrived from London and the Hague, containing the refusal of the cabinet of St. James's and the States-General to join the coalition. The generals redoubled their representations on the disastrous state of the army; and the Countess Lichtenau, the King's mistress, yielding to a large bribe from the French government, employed her too powerful influence for the same object (5). Assailed at once in so many different quarters, and overcome by the representations of his generals as to the necessity of the measure, the King at length yielded; and on the 29th the orders given for battle were revoked, and a

(1) They were—

1. The King disclaims all intention to restore the ancient *regime*, but wishes only the establishment of such a constitution as may be for the advantage of the kingdom.

2. He insists that all propagandism should cease in his own dominions and those of his allies.

3. That the King should be set at liberty.

23d September, 1792.

(2) Hard. i. 500, 501.

(3) "The proposals of the King of Prussia," said he, "do not appear to offer a basis for a negotiation, but they demonstrate that their distress is very great, a fact sufficiently indicated by the wretchedness of their bread, the multitude of their sick, and the languor of their attacks. I am persuaded that

the King of Prussia is now heartily sorry at being so far in advance, and would readily adopt any means of extricating himself from his embarrassment. He keeps so near me, from the wish to engage us in a combat as the only means he has of escaping; for if I keep within my intrenchments for eight days longer, his army will dissolve of itself from want of provisions. I will undertake no serious negotiation without your authority, and without receiving from you the basis on which it is to be conducted. All that I have hitherto done with M. Maunstein is to gain time, and commit no one." —*Secret Despatch, Dumouriez to the French Government, 24th September.*—Hard. i. 500.

(4) Hard, i. 499, 509.

(5) Hard. vii. 245.

Sept. 29. retreat resolved on. It was agreed between the generals of the two armies, that the Prussians, on condition of evacuating the fortresses of which they had made themselves masters, should not be disquieted in their rear; and Dumouriez, delighted at being relieved by his skill and firmness from the overwhelming dangers with which he had been surrounded, wrote to the Convention :—"The Republic owes its salvation to the retreat of the Prussians. Had I not resolved to resist the universal opinion of all around me, the enemy was saved, and France in danger (1)."

In coming to this determination, the Prussian cabinet were governed, not less by the old-standing jealousy of Austria, which at that period so strongly influenced both their councils and the feelings of the people, than the prospect of dangers from a further advance. The King, in entering upon the campaign, had contemplated only a rapid march to Paris; but the protraction of the war, and increasing resistance of the French, rendered it evident that that object could not easily be accomplished, and that its prosecution would seriously endanger the long hoped for Polish acquisitions, while the dethronement and captivity of Louis exposed him to imminent hazard, if the army continued its advance towards the capital (2).

Distress of the Allies. They resolve to retreat. The event soon justified the confidence of the French general. Dumouriez was at the head of sixty thousand men, even after all the losses of the campaign, including twelve thousand horse; his artillery was numerous, and his position excellent, while large detachments were rapidly forming at Châlons, Reims, Soissons, Épernay, and all the towns in the interior. His troops, though somewhat affected by the severity of the weather, were upon the whole in good health and condition; and sufficient supplies arrived for the camp from Sedan and Metz, which still remained in the power of the French. On the other hand, the condition of the Allied army was daily becoming more critical. Their convoys, harassed by the garrisons of Sedan and Montmédy, and drawn from the remote provinces of Luxemburg and Treves, by the pass of Grandpré, arrived very irregularly; the soldiers had been already four days without rations, and subsisted on corn steeped in unwholesome water. The plains of Champagne were sterile, destitute alike of water, forage, and provisions. The rains had set in with more than usual severity, and the troops, bivouacked on the open plain, were severely affected with dysenteries, and other contagious maladies, which had already cut off one-third from the effective strength of the army. In these circumstances, to advance further into the enemy's territory, would have been an act of the highest temerity, and might have endangered the safety of the King of Prussia, as well as his whole forces. An attack on the French intrenched camp was of doubtful success; failure in such an enterprise certain ruin. The only rational plan was to retire into the fertile district of the three bishoprics, form the siege of Montmédy, and take up their quarters in Lorraine for the winter, retaining as their advanced posts the defiles in the Argonne forest, which they had acquired. But this project was inconsistent with the secret convention which had been adopted, and therefore a retreat to the Rhine was resolved on.

Consternation at Paris from the retreat to Sile. Menebould. But while these perplexities were accumulating on the Allied forces, it was with the utmost difficulty that Dumouriez was able to maintain his position against the reiterated orders of the Convention, and the representations of the officers in his own camp. The French go-

[ (1) Secret Despatch, Oct. 1, 1792. Hard. ii. 2.

(2) St.-Cyr, i. 80, 81. Jom. ii. 123, 127. Th. iii. 120. Dum. iii. 20.



vernment were in the greatest alarm at finding no regular force between them and the Allies : and the detached corps of the enemy, who spread as far as Reims, diffused a general consternation over the whole country. Courier after courier was dispatched to the general, with orders to quit his position, and draw near to the capital ; and in these representations Kellermann, and the other officers of the army, warmly joined. The great concentration of forces soon occasioned a want of provisions in the camp ; the soldiers were at last two or three days without bread ; and attempts at mutiny were already beginning, especially in the battalions of *Fédérés*, recently arrived from Paris. Even the superior officers began to be impressed with the necessity of retreating ; and Kellermann urged such a movement with so much earnestness, that the general was obliged to promise, like Columbus, that if the object of his wishes was not attained in a given number of days, he would retire. But the firmness of Dumouriez triumphed over every obstacle ; and, by impressing upon his soldiers the truth, that whichever of the parties could fast longest would prove victorious, he inspired them with resolution to surmount all their privations (1).

Conferences opened for the retreat of the Prussians. An armistice of the limited sort above mentioned, which stipulated only that the Allies should not be molested in their rear during their retreat, and left the French at perfect liberty to harass the flanks of the invading army, was instantly taken advantage of by Dumouriez. On the same day on which it was concluded, he detached several corps, which forced back the most advanced parties of the enemy, which had spread such dismay through the interior, and, gradually pressing round their flanks, at length hemmed in their rear, cut off their detachments, and intercepted their convoys. Experience seldom teaches wisdom ; an error of precisely the same nature was committed by Napoléon, with still more disastrous consequences, in the armistice between Murat and Kutusoff, near Moscow, in the Russian campaign (2).

Sept. 30. Allies retreat. On the 30th September the Allies commenced their retreat, and repassed the defiles of the Argonne forest without molestation on the 2d and 3d October. Kellermann in vain urged the commander to adopt more vigorous measures to harass their march, and strongly recommended the immediate detachment of a large body upon Clermont. In consequence of the secret understanding with the enemy, and of a distrust of his own troops in field movements in presence of so disciplined a force as the Prussians, Dumouriez allowed them to retreat in perfect tranquillity, and in the most leisurely manner. On the first day they retired only three miles, and without abandoning any of their equipage ; and it was not till the defile of Grandpré was passed, and the Prussians were fifteen leagues in advance, that Kellermann was detached in pursuit. The Allies withdrew in the finest order, and in the most pacific manner, though dreadfully weakened by disease (3).

Relieved by the retreat of the Prussians from the pressing danger which had obliged him to concentrate his forces, Dumouriez conceived himself at liberty to resume his favourite project of an invasion of Flanders. Leaving, therefore, Kellermann with forty thousand men to follow the retiring columns, he sent thirty thousand to the army of the North, under Beurnonville, and he himself repaired to Paris. The force with which the Prussians retired was about seventy thousand men, and their retreat was conducted throughout in the most imposing manner, taking position and facing about on occasion of every

(1) Dum. iii. 54, 60. Th. iii. 116.

(2) Dum. iii. 63, 65. Jun. ii. 138.

(3) Jom. ii. 130, 139. Th. iii. 122. Toul. ii. 345, 349.

halt. It was impossible, consequently, for Kellermann, with his inconsiderable force, to make any impression on the retreating mass; and the French generals, satisfied with saving the Republic, appear to have been rather disposed to make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy. In virtue of an express or implied understanding, no molestation was offered to the invaders in their retreat. Verdun and Longwy were successively abandoned. In the end of October the Allies evacuated France, and the troops of Kellermann went into cantonments between the fortress of Longwy and the Moselle (1).

On getting possession of the ceded fortresses, the commissaries of the Convention took a bloody revenge on the royalist party. Several young women, who had presented garlands of flowers to the King of Prussia during the advance of the army, were sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and condemned to death. The Prussians left behind them, on their route, the most melancholy proofs of the disasters of the campaign: all the villages were filled with the dead and dying. Without any considerable fighting, the Allies had lost, by dysentery and fevers, more than a fourth of their numbers (2).

Operations  
in Flanders.  
Siege of  
Lille.

While these decisive events were taking place in the central provinces, operations of minor importance, but yet material to the issue of the campaign, were going on on the two flanks in Alsace and in the Low-Countries. The principal forces of both parties having been drawn from the Netherlands to strengthen the armies of the centre, the movements there were necessarily inconsiderable. The French camp at Maulde was broken up, and a retreat commenced to the camp at Bruillé, a strong position somewhat in the rear. But in executing the movement, the retreating force was, on September 14, attacked and completely routed by the Austrians with the loss of all their artillery, equipage, and ammunition. Encouraged by this easy success, the invaders, under the Archduke Albert, with a force of twenty-five thousand, undertook the siege of Lille, one of the strongest towns in Europe, and which, in 1708, had made a glorious defence against the united armies of Eugene and Marlborough. The garrison, consisting of ten thousand men, and the commander, a man of courage and energy, were devoted to the cause of the republic. In these circumstances, little success could be hoped for from a regular siege; but the Austrians endeavoured to intimidate the governor by the terror of a bombardment, which was continued night and day for a whole week. This terrible tempest produced little impression upon the soldiers, who, secure within bomb-proof casemates, beheld it fall with indifference upon the defenceless inhabitants; but upon the people in the vicinity it produced such extreme consternation, that it was afterwards ascertained that had Lille been taken, almost all the other frontier towns would have at once capitulated, to avoid a similar fate. The Austrians, in fact, would have acquired, by the capture of this important city, a firm footing within the French frontier, attended by the most important effect upon the future issue of the campaign. But their operations were interrupted by the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the approach of considerable forces from various quarters to raise the siege. The inhabitants bore with heroic firmness the terrors of a bombardment, which was continued with unprecedented vigour on the part of the enemy, and consumed a considerable portion of the city; and during the siege General Lamartillière effected his entry with above ten thousand men, so that the besieged became equal to the besieging force. This circumstance, joined to the exhaustion of their

(1) Toul. ii. 351, 356. Jom. ii. 141, 142. Th. iii. 180.

(2) Toul. ii. 357. Jom. ii. 142.

ammunition, and the approach of a body detached by Dumouriez to threaten their operations, induced the Austrians to abandon their enterprise; and on the 7th October the siege was raised, and the troops withdrawn from the French territory. The terrors of the conflagration, and the glorious issue of the siege, were celebrated throughout all France, and contributed not a little to augment that energetic spirit which now animated the inhabitants even of the most distant departments, and soon became so formidable to the neighbouring states (1).

Siege raised, Oct. 7. Meanwhile, General Biron, who commanded in Alsace forty-five thousand men, consumed the most important period of the campaign in tardy preparations. But at length General Custine, who was at the head of a force of seventeen thousand men, posted near Landau, undertook an offensive movement against Spires, where immense magazines had been collected. By a rapid advance, he surrounded a corps of three thousand men, who were stationed near the city, and compelled them to surrender, an event which led to the immediate capture of Spires, Worms, and Frankendal. This important success, which took place at the very time that the main body of the Allies was engaged in the Argonne forest, might have had the most important effect upon the future fate of the campaign, had Custine immediately obeyed the orders of the Convention, and, relinquishing his invasion of the Palatinate, turned with his victorious forces on the rear and communications of the Duke of Brunswick's army.

Operations on the Upper-Rhine. Sept. 30. But that general had other projects in view, which ultimately turned out not a little serviceable to the Republic. Disobeying the orders of government, he remained fourteen days in apparent inactivity in the Palatinate, but in reality carrying on a secret correspondence with the garrison and Jacobin Club in Mentz. In consequence, on the 18th October, he moved, at the head of twenty-two thousand men, towards that city, which was invested on the 19th, and on the 21st, before a single battery had been raised, that important fortress, the key to the western provinces of the empire, surrendered by capitulation, the garrison of four thousand men being allowed to retire, on the condition of not serving against the French for twelve months. Thus did the Allies lose the only fortified post which they possessed on the Rhine, a signal proof of the rashness and presumption with which they had penetrated into the heart of France, without securing in an adequate manner their means of retreat (2).

Capture of Mentz, Oct. 21. Stimulated by his desire of plunder, Custine made a useless incursion to Frankfort, which was of no real service to the campaign; while the Duke of Brunswick, terrified at the loss of Mentz, advanced by forced marches from the neighbourhood of Luxemburg to Coblenz, where his forces defiled over the Rhine by a flying bridge for twelve successive days. The corps of the emigrant noblesse was immediately dissolved, from want of any resources to keep it together; the Austrians under Clairfait, were recalled to the defence of the Low-Countries; and the Prussians put into cantonments on the right bank of the Rhine. Thus was completed the dissolution of that splendid army, which a few months before had entered France with such brilliant prospects, and by which, if properly directed, might have been achieved the deliverance of Europe from the scourge of democratic ambition (3). What oceans of blood required to be shed, how many provinces laid

(1) *Jom. ii. 170, 175, 176. Th. iii. 181. Ann. Reg. 1793, 55, 56.*

(2) *Jom. ii. 148, 154, 157, 158. Th. iii. 182. Ann. Reg. 1793, 70, 71. Hard. ii. 41, 61.*

(3) *Jom. ii. 160, 161. St.-Cyr, 1, 8, 9. Th. iii. 183, 186. Hard. ii. 61, 73.*

waste, how many cities destroyed, before the vantage-ground could be regained, before the plains of Champagne again beheld a victorious enemy, or a righteous retribution was taken for the sins of the conquering republic!

Plan for the invasion of Flanders. The final retreat of the Allies left Dumouriez at liberty to carry into execution a project he had long meditated, that of invading the Low-Countries, and rescuing those fine provinces from the Austrian dominion. The advantages of this design were evident; to advance the frontiers of the Republic to the Rhine, to draw from the conquered provinces the means of carrying on the war, to stir up the germ of revolution in Flanders, reinforce the armies by the discontented spirits in that populous country, and extinguish the English influence in Holland, were objects worthy of the conqueror of Brunswick. He received unlimited powers from the government, and the losses sustained by the Allies during their invasion, gave him a great superiority of force. The right wing, composed of a large portion of the troops detached from the Argonne forest, consisted of sixteen thousand men; between that and the centre was placed General Harville with fourteen thousand. Dumouriez himself commanded the main body, consisting of forty thousand men, while the left wing, under Labourdonnaye, was about thirty thousand strong—in all a hundred thousand men, all animated by the highest spirit, and anticipating nothing but triumph and conquest, from their recent success over the Prussian invaders (1).

To oppose this immense army, the Austrians had no adequate force at command. Their whole troops, including the corps which General Clairfait had brought from the Duke of Brunswick's army, did not exceed forty thousand men, and were scattered over too extended a line. The centre, under the command of the Archduke Albert, was stationed in front of the important city of Mons; while the remainder of the army, scattered over a front of nearly thirty miles, could render little assistance, in case of need, to the main body (2).

French invasion of Flanders. This main body, not above eighteen thousand men, was intrenched on a strong position near the village of JEMMAPES. The field of battle had been long before chosen by the Imperialists, and extended through the villages of Cuesmes and Jemmapes, to the heights of Berthaimont on the one hand, and the village of Sifly on the other, over a succession of eminences which commanded all the adjacent plain. Fourteen redoubts, strengthened by all the resources of art, and armed by nearly a hundred pieces of artillery, seemed almost to compensate to the Austrians for their great inferiority of number. The French artillery, however, was nearly equal to that of their opponents, and their forces greatly superior, amounting to no less than forty thousand men; and though many of these troops were inexperienced, recent triumphs had in an extraordinary degree elevated their courage. In this action, the new system of tactics was tried with signal success, viz. that of accumulating masses upon one point, and in this manner forcing some weak part of the position, and compelling the whole to be abandoned (3).

Battle of Jemmapes, Nov. 6. On the 6th November, the battle commenced at daybreak. The French troops, who had been under arms, or in bivouac for three successive days, received the order to advance with shouts of joy, moved forward with rapidity, and lost few men in traversing the plain which separated them from the enemy. The attack was commenced by General Beurnonville on the village of Cuesmes: a severe fire of artillery for some hours arrested his

(1) Compare *Jom.* ii. 215. *Toul.* iii. 38, 39. *Th.* ii. 210, 211. *Ann. Reg.* 1793, 59. *Dum.* iii. 121. (3) *Jom.* ii. 217. *Dum.* iii. 165, 169. *Toul.* iii. 54. *Ann. Reg.* 1793, 61, 62. *Hard.* ii. 45, 47.  
(2) *Toul.* iii. 40. *Ann. Reg.* 1793, 61.

efforts; but at length the flank of the village of Jemmapes was turned, and the redoubts on the left of the Austrian position were carried by the impetuous attack of the French columns. Dumouriez seized this moment to make his centre advance against the front of Jemmapes; the column moved forward rapidly and with little loss; but, on approaching the village, they were attacked in flank by some squadrons of horse, which pierced the column, and drove back a portion of the French cavalry which supported it. The moment was in the last degree critical; for, at the same instant, the leading battalions checked by a tremendous fire of grape-shot, were beginning to waver at the foot of the redoubts. In this extremity the heroism of a brave valet of Dumouriez, named Baptiste, who rallied the broken troops, arrested the victorious squadrons of the Austrians, while the intrepidity and conduct of a young general restored the front of the line. Quickly forming the broken regiments into one column, which he called the column of Jemmapes, he placed himself at its head, and renewed the attack on the redoubts with so much vigour, that the village was carried, and the Austrians were at length driven from their intrenchments in the centre of the field. This young officer was the Duke de Chartres, afterwards LOUIS PHILIPPE, King of the French (1).

While the battle was contested with so much obstinacy in the centre. Dumouriez had an equal cause for anxiety on the right. Bernnonville, though at first successful on that side, had paused when he beheld the confusion of the central division; and his movements vacillated between a desire to maintain the ground he had won, and draw back his forces to support the column which seemed in such confusion in the plain. This vacillation was soon perceived by the enemy; the fire of the French artillery could hardly equal that of five redoubts which played upon their ranks, and a large body of Imperial cavalry was in front, ready to charge on the first appearance of disorder. Dumouriez fled to the spot; rode along the front of two brigades of his old soldiers from the camp at Maulde, who rent the air with cries of *Vive Dumouriez*, and succeeded in rallying the squadrons of horse, who were beginning to fall into confusion. The Imperial cavalry charged immediately after, but, being received by a volley within pistol-shot by the infantry, turned about in confusion; and the French dragoons being immediately detached in pursuit, the Imperialist horse were irretrievably routed, and fled in confusion to Mons. Animated by this success, Dumouriez made the victorious brigades chant the Marseillais Hymn, and, taking advantage of their enthusiasm, rushed forward at their head and entered the redoubts by the gorge. Being still uneasy about his centre, however, he set off, at the head of six squadrons of cavalry, to reinforce the Duke de Chartres; but he had not proceeded above a few hundred paces, when he met his aide-de-camp, the young Duke de Montpensier, with the joyful intelligence that the battle was there already won, and that the Austrians were retiring on all points to Mons (2).

Such was the famous battle of Jemmapes; the first pitched battle which had been gained by the Republican armies, and on that account both celebrated at the time, and important in its consequences, beyond the real merits of the contest. The Austrian loss amounted to five thousand men; they withdrew all their artillery, except fourteen pieces, and retired in good order to Mons. The French lost above six thousand men (3); but the consequences of the victory on the spirits and moral strength of the two parties were in-

(1) Dum. iii. 169, 173. Toul. iii. 49. Ann. Reg. 242, 246. Ann. Reg. 1793, 62, 63. Hard. ii. 45, 47. 1793, 62. Th. iii. 241, 245.

(2) Dum. iii. 173, 175. Toul. iii. 49. Th. iii. 246.

calculable, and in fact led to the immediate conquest of the whole Netherlands.

Tardy advance of Dumouriez. Conquest of Flanders.

These great results, however, were rather owing to the terrors of the Imperialists, than the vigorous measures of the French general. On the 7th, he entered Mons, which opened its gates without resistance, and there remained in perfect inactivity for five days. Mean-while, the Austrian authorities took to flight in the rear, and, abandoning Brussels, sought refuge in Ruremonde. The French, in the course of their advance, were every where received with enthusiasm; Ath, Tournay, Neuport, Ostend, Nov. 8 to 12. and Bruges, opened their gates; and, after a slight skirmish with the rear-guard, Brussels itself was occupied by their victorious troops. On Nov. 14. the right, General Valence captured Charleroi, and advanced to Namur; while on the left, Labourdonnaye, after much hesitation, moved forward to Ghent and Antwerp. Before the end of November, the Imperialists retained nothing of their possessions in the Low-Countries, but the citadels of that important city and Namur (1).

Jealousy of Dumouriez at Paris.

The magnitude of these successes excited the jealousy of the Republican party at Paris. On the very day of the cannonade at Valmy, the Republic had been proclaimed, and royalty abolished, over France. The rapid conquests of the young general awakened the alarms of the Republican despots; another Cæsar, a second Cromwell were denounced; Marat, in his sanguinary journal, and Robespierre, from the tribune, proclaimed him as threatening the liberty of the people. If the event in some degree justified their predictions, it must be conceded that they occasioned it, by showing him what fate he had to expect (2), if the chance of war, by exposing him to any considerable reverse, should place his head in their hands.

French advance to the Scheldt. Fall of Antwerp.

While these jealousies were forming at the seat of power, the career of conquest brought Dumouriez to the Scheldt, where events productive of the most important consequences took place. The Executive Council, by a decree, on November 16, commanded him to open that river to the Flemish vessels, an event which could not fail to produce a rupture with the maritime powers. He, in consequence, directed a considerable body of forces to that quarter; and Labourdonnaye, after having made himself master of Malines, and a large depôt of military stores which were placed in that city, advanced towards Antwerp. He was there superseded by Dumouriez, in consequence of suspicions of his fidelity to the Republican government, and the command given to Miranda, an officer of zeal and talent, who afterwards became celebrated for his attempts to restore the independence of South America. On November 30, the citadel of that important city capitulated to the new commander, and the French became undisputed masters of the Scheldt (3).

The Republican general lost no time in carrying into effect the favourite French project of opening that great artery of Flemish prosperity. He immediately wrote to Miranda:—"Lose not a moment in dispatching a flat-bottomed boat down the Scheldt, to ascertain whether the navigation is really impeded, or if it is merely a report spread by the Dutch. Do every thing in your power to open the stream to commercial enterprise, that the Flemings, contrasting the generosity of the Republic with the avarice of the Austrian government, who sold the navigation of the Scheldt to the Dutch for

(1) Toul. iii. 51, 52. Jom. ii. 236, 239, 243.

(2) Toul. iii. 52, 53. Jom. ii. 255. Th. iii. 263.

(3) Jom. ii. 247. Pièces Just. ii. No. 6. Th. ii. 266.

7,000,000 florins (1), may be induced to adopt the genuine principles of freedom." Miranda lost no time in taking measures for carrying this design into execution; and in a few days, the flotilla, moored at the mouth of the river, ascended to Antwerp, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, who beheld in this auspicious event the dawn of a brighter era of commercial enterprise than had ever opened upon their city since the rise of the Dutch Republic (2).

French capture Liège. While the left wing of the army was prosecuting these successes, the centre, under Dumouriez himself, was also following the career of conquest. A strong rear-guard of the Austrians, posted near Roucoux, was attacked on the 26th, and, after an obstinate engagement, the Imperialists retired, and the next morning Liège opened its gates to the victors. The revolutionary party immediately proceeded to measures of extreme violence in that city; a Jacobin club was formed, which speedily rivalled in energy and atrocity the parent institution in Paris; while the democratic party divided into opposite factions, on the formation of an independent republic, or a junction with France. Danton and Lacroix, the commissioners of the Convention, strongly supported the latter party, who speedily broke out into every species of violence (3).

Right wing reduces Namur. At the same time, the right wing, under Valence, pressed the siege of the citadel of Namur. The Austrians, who had established themselves in the vicinity to annoy the besiegers, were first dislodged, and the trenches being shortly after opened, the fort of Vilette, a strong work which impeded the operations of the besiegers, was carried by assault on the 30th November. The citadel, in consequence, surrendered a few days after, and the garrison, consisting of above two thousand men, were made prisoners of war (4). About the same time, Miranda dispossessed the Austrian government from Ruremonde, and took possession of that city; while, on the other side, Dumouriez, after dislodging them from their position, covering Aix-la-Chapelle, made himself master of it also.

Dumouriez puts his army into winter quarters. Dumouriez now projected an irruption into the Dutch territory, and the siege of Maestricht, one of the principal frontier fortresses belonging to that republic. But the Executive Council, justly apprehensive of engaging at once in a war with the United-Provinces and Great-Britain, which was bound by treaty to support them, commanded him to desist from the enterprise; and his force being now much weakened by sickness, want, fatigue, and the desertion of above ten thousand men, who had left their colours during the military license which followed the conquest of Belgium, and the loss of six thousand horses, he resolved to put his troops into winter quarters. His army, accordingly, was put into cantonments, in a line from Namur, by Aix-la-Chapelle, to Ruremonde. The government urged him to continue his offensive operations, and to drive the Imperialists beyond the Rhine; but the exhausted state of his soldiers rendered any further movements impracticable, and, yielding to his urgent representations, they at length consented to their enjoying some weeks of repose (5).

Flanders was not long of reaping the bitter fruits of republican conquest. On the 19th November, the Convention, inflamed by the victory of Jemmapes, published the famous Resolution, in which they declared, "that they would grant fraternity and succour to every people who were disposed to recover

(1) *Jom. ii.* 248.

(2) *Jom. ii.* 249.

(3) *Ann. Reg.* 1793, 66. *Th. iii.* 266.

(4) *Ann. Reg.* 1793, 67. *Th. iii.* 266. *Jom. ii.* 249. *Toul.* iii. 252, 253.

(5) *Jom. ii.* 250, 258, 259, 260. *Th. iii.* 267. *Ann. Reg.* 1793, 69. *Dum. iii.* 230, 233.

their liberty; and that they charged their generals to give aid to all such people, and to defend all citizens who had been, or might be, disquieted in the cause of freedom." This decree, which was equivalent to a declaration of war against every established government, was ordered to be translated, and published in all languages. And it was followed up, on December 15, by another decree, calculated in an especial manner to injure the subjects of the conquered provinces. By this celebrated manifesto, the Republic proclaimed, in all the countries which it conquered, "the sovereignty of the people, the suppression of all the constituted authorities, of all subsisting taxes and imposts, of all feudal and territorial rights, of all the privileges of nobility, and exclusive privileges of every description. It announced to all their subjects, liberty, fraternity, and equality, invited them to form themselves forthwith into primary assemblies, to elect an administration and provisional government, and declared that it would treat as enemies all persons who, refusing these benefits, or renouncing them, should show any disposition to preserve, recall, or treat with their prince, or any of the privileged castes (1)."

Decree of the Convention against all governments. This last decree excited as violent indignation in Belgium as the first had awakened alarm through all Europe. The Flemings were by no means disposed to abandon their ancient chiefs; and the feudal feelings, which existed in great force in that country, were revolted at the sudden severing of all the ties which had hitherto been held most sacred. The dearest interests, the strongest attachments of nature were violated, when the whole ancient aristocracy of the land was uprooted, and a foundation laid for the formation of a new set of governors, drawn from the universal suffrage of the inhabitants; property of every kind, institutions of whatever duration, were threatened by so violent a shock to the fabric of society. These feelings, natural on so extreme a change in any country, were in a peculiar manner roused in Flanders, in consequence of the powerful influence of the clergy over its inhabitants, and the vast number of established interests and great properties which were threatened by the sweeping changes of the French Convention: nor was the exasperation diminished by the speeches of the orators who introduced the measure; Cambon, who moved the resolution, having spoken of the Low-Countries as a conquered province; and Brissot, who seconded it, warned the Belgians to adopt it, under pain of being "put to the ban of French philosophy (2)."

Immediately after issuing the decree, Flanders was inundated by a host of revolutionary agents, who, with liberty, patriotism, and protection in their mouths, had nothing but violence, confiscation, and bloodshed in their measures. Forced requisitions of men, horses, and provisions, enormous contributions levied by military execution, compulsory payment in the depreciated assignats of France, general spoliation of the churches, were among the first effects of the democratic government. The legions of fiscal agents and tax-gatherers who overspread the land, appeared actuated by no other motive but to wring their uttermost farthing out of the wretched inhabitants, and make their own fortunes out of a transient possession of the conquered districts. At their head were Danton, Lacroix, and Carrier, republicans of the sternest cast and the most rapacious disposition, who infused their own infernal energy into all inferior agents, and gave to the inhabitants of Flanders a foretaste of the Reign of Terror (3).

(1) *Jom.* ii. 264, 265. *Pièces Just.* No. 8, 9.

(2) *Jom.* ii. 265. *Th.* iii. 268.

(3) *Dum.* iii. 277, 278. *Jom.* ii. 265.



*Severe oppression of Flanders.* Five-and-thirty commissioners, really chosen by the Jacobin Club in Paris, though nominally by the Convention, supported these three master-spirits in the work of destruction. They were sent to Flanders nominally to organize the march of freedom—really to plunder the whole aristocratic party. Immediately on their arrival they divided that unhappy country into districts, and each in his little domain proceeded to the work of spoliation: The peasants were driven by strokes of the sabre, and at the point of the bayonet, to the primary assemblies which had been designated by the Convention; while the churches and châteaux were plundered, moveables of every description sold, and the proceeds paid over to the French commissioners. The estates of the clergy were every where put under sequestration, while valuable property of every description, belonging to lay proprietors, was seized and sold; and the unhappy owners, under the odious title of Aristocrats, too often sent off, with their wives and children, to the fortresses of France, there to remain as hostages for further requisitions (1).

The inhabitants of Flanders, awakened by these terrible calamities from the dream of liberty, speedily became as ardent for the restoration of their former government, as they had ever been for its overthrow. The provinces of Brabant and Flanders, which had made such efforts to throw off the yoke of Joseph II., having tasted the consequences of Republican conquest, made the utmost efforts to rescue themselves from their liberators. A deputation was sent to the Emperor, imploring him to come to their deliverance, promising the aid of thirty thousand men, and large advances of money, in case of assistance (2). Such were the first fruits of Republican conquest in Europe; but they were not the last. The words of freedom are seductive to all; its evils are known only to the actual sufferers. Europe required to suffer the evils under which Flanders groaned, before the ruinous illusion which had led to its subjugation, was dispelled.

*War declared against Piedmont, Sept. 15.* While these great changes were passing in the North, events of minor importance, but still productive of important consequences, occurred on the Southern and Eastern frontier. The mountains of Savoy were the theatre of less sanguinary struggles, between the Republican troops and the Italian soldiers. The evident peril of the Piedmontese dominions, from their close proximity to the great centre of revolutionary action, had led, early in 1792, to measures of precaution by the Sardinian government; and all the states of Italy, alarmed at the rapid progress of democratical principles, had made advances towards a league for their mutual support. The ferment in Piedmont was so strong, and the contagion of liberal principles so violent, that nothing but war, it soon became evident, could save the kingdom from revolt. Matters were brought to a crisis in September 1792, by the rapid advance of the Imperialists through the Tyrol, into the Milanese states. The French dispatched an embassy to propose an alliance with the Piedmontese government, promising in that case to guarantee their dominions, repress the turbulence of their subjects, and cede to that power all the conquests made by their joint forces to the south of the Alps. But the peril of any conjunction with the Republican troops to any established government, was so evident, that the King of Sardinia rejected the proposals. The French envoy, in consequence, was not permitted to proceed farther than Alexandria; and the Convention, immediately on receiving intelligence of that decisive step, declared war against the Piedmontese monarch, and immediate orders were dispatched to General

Montesquieu to assail Savoy, where the Jacobin emissaries had already sown the seeds of disaffection to the Italian dynasty (1).

Sept. 21. On the 21st of September, the Republicans unexpectedly entered French en-  
ter Savoy. Savoy, and after a feeble resistance, took possession of Chambéry and Montmélian, and shortly after overran the whole valleys as far as the foot of Mont-Cenis. The Sardinian forces, through nearly ten thousand strong, were so dispersed that it was impossible to unite them in sufficient numbers to oppose any resistance to the sudden attack of the Republicans; another proof, in addition to the many on record, of the extreme difficulty of defending a range of mountains against a superior and enterprising enemy. Shortly after, operations on a still more extensive scale were undertaken against the country of Nice. On the 1st October, General Anselme crossed the Var at the head of nine thousand men, and on the same day, the French fleet, consisting of twelve ships of the line and frigates, cast anchor within half cannon-shot of the walls of Nice. Terrified at such superior forces, General Courten, who had not two thousand men at his command, and was menaced by an insurgent population within the town, precipitately retreated towards Saorgio and the Col di Tende, leaving the whole coast and valleys, to the foot of the great chain of the Maritime Alps, in the possession of the French. Mont-alban and Villa-Franca, the first of which had so gloriously resisted the Prince of Conti in 1744, surrendered at the first summons, and Saorgio became the frontier post of the Piedmontese possessions (2).

The Republicans made a cruel use of their victory. The inhabitants of Nice and the neighbouring country were rewarded for the friendly reception they had given them, by plunder, massacre, and outrages of every description. The mountainers in the remotest valleys were hunted out, their cattle seized, their houses burned, and their women violated, by those whom they had hailed as deliverers. A proclamation, issued by General Anselme against these excesses, met with no sort of attention; and the commissioners appointed by the Convention to enquire into the disorders, were unable to make any effectual reparation. Shortly after, an expedition was undertaken against the little fortress of Oneglia by the combined forces of land and sea; and the inhabitants having fired on a boat which approached the batteries with a flag of truce, and killed the officer who bore it, a sanguinary retribution for this violation of the usages of war was taken by the total destruction of the town (3).

Thus, in the space of a few weeks, were the countries of Nice and Savoy torn from the Sardinian crown, though defended by considerable armies, intersected with rugged and unpassable mountains and studded with fortresses once deemed impregnable. The sudden prostration of all these means of defence before the first attack of the Republicans, gave rise to the most painful reflections. It demonstrated the inefficient state of the Piedmontese troops, once so celebrated, and gave a sad presage of the probable result of an attack on Italy, when its best defenders had given such disgraceful proofs of pusillanimity. Nor was the general consternation diminished by the appearance of the exiles from France, who soon after arrived in the most lamentable condition at Geneva and Turin; a melancholy example of a sudden transition from the highest rank and prosperity, to the most abject state of misery (4).

French invade Switzerland.

Having thus carried the Republican arms to the foot of the great central ridge which separates France from Italy, the Convention

(1) Botta, i. 75, 88. Jom. ii. 180.

(2) Jom. ii. 190, 198. Ann. Reg. 1793, 74. Bot. i. 95.

(3) Jom. ii. 200, 203, 205. Botta, i. 92, 96. Ann.

Reg. 1793, 74.

(4) Botta, i. 97, 98.

proceeded to extend their conquests to the republics of Switzerland. The cantons of that confederacy were much divided in opinion, some having resented with vehemence the massacre of the Swiss Guard on 10th August, and others being tinged by democratical principles, and ready to receive the Republican soldiers as deliverers from the prevailing power of the aristocracy. The Pays de Vaud, in particular, was in such a state of fermentation, that some severe examples had been found necessary by the government to maintain their authority. Paralysed by these intestine divisions, the Helvetic Confederacy had resolved to maintain an armed neutrality; but the grasping views of the Republican conquerors deprived them of such an advantage, and brought them at last into the general field of European warfare (1).

Clavières, minister of foreign affairs in France, and a Genevese by birth, espoused warmly the part of the malcontents in his native city. He was eager to turn his newly-acquired power to the ruin of the faction, with which he had long contended in that diminutive republic. He directed Servan, the minister at war, to write to General Montesquieu, "that it would be well to break the fetters which despotism had forged to bind the Genevese, if they were inclined to publish the Rights of Man." That general was extremely unwilling to commence this new aggression, not only because the Diet had given him the strongest assurances of their resolution to maintain a strict neutrality, but because the canton of Berne had assembled a force of nearly ten thousand men to enforce its observation; and it was foreseen, that an attack on Geneva would be held as a declaration of war against the whole confederacy. Undeterred by these prudential considerations, the French Government commanded Montesquieu immediately to advance, while on their side, the Swiss sent 1800 men to aid in the defence of the city. When the Republicans arrived in the neighbourhood of Geneva, they found the gates closed, the succours arrived; and received a notification from the Senate of Berne that they would defend it to the last extremity. The defenceless state of the frontier towns in the Jura, between France and Switzerland, rendered it highly imprudent to engage in an immediate contest with these warlike mountaineers. In these circumstances negotiation seemed preferable to open violence, and, after a short time, the French retired from the neighbourhood of Geneva, and General Montesquieu ventured openly to disobey the rash commands of the Convention, who had ordered him to undertake the siege of that city. Two successive conventions were agreed to, in virtue of which the Swiss withdrew their forces from the town, and the French their troops from its vicinity. Geneva was rescued for the moment from the peril of Republican invasion, and Montesquieu had the glory of saving his country from the consequences of the rash and unjustifiable aggression which they had commenced (2):

The Convention lost no time in consolidating their conquests, and making them the foundation of farther revolutionary measures. A Jacobin club of 1200 members was formed at Chambéry, with affiliated societies through all Savoy, which soon spread the fever of democracy through the whole Maritime Alps, and threatened the institutions of Piedmont with total overthrow. A National Convention, established at Chambéry on 21st October proclaimed the abolition of royalty, tithes, and the privileged orders; and deputations from all the clubs in Savoy were sent to Paris, and received in the most enthusiastic manner by the French legislature. At length, on

(1) Jom. ii. 306, 310. Th. iii. 190, 191.

(2) Ann. Reg. 1793, 75. Jom. ii. 311, 312, 313. Th. iii. 191.

the 27th November, the whole of Savoy was incorporated with France, under the name of the Department of Mont-Blanc; and shortly after, the district of Nice was swallowed up in the encroaching Republic, under the title of the Department of the Maritime Alps, and the state of Monaco added to its extensive dominions (1).

Operations on the Upper-Rhine. Amidst these general triumphs of the Republican cause, fortune deserted their standards on the Upper-Rhine. The French forces in that quarter, which amounted, including the armies of Kellermann, Custine, and Biron, to sixty thousand men, might have struck an important blow against the Duke of Brunswick's army, now severely weakened by the departure of the Austrians under Clairfait, for the defence of the Low-Countries. But the movements of these generals, not sufficiently combined with each other, led to nothing but disaster. The plan adopted was for Beurnonville, who had succeeded Kellermann, to take possession of Treves and move upon Coblenz, where he was to effect a junction with Custine, and, with their united forces, press upon the Allies, already threatened by the army of Flanders, and compel them to recross the Rhine. This plan was ably conceived, but its execution entirely failed, owing partly to the difficulty of the enterprise in the beginning of winter, and partly to the want of cordial co-operation among the generals who conducted it (2).

General Larobolière, who was intrusted with the advanced guard of Beurnonville's army, amounting to 3000 men, destined to attack the city of Treves, was recalled when his journey was half-completed, by the apprehensions of his commander-in-chief; while Custine, whose force, by the deduction of the garrison of Mayence, was reduced to 15,000 men, seemed more intent upon pillaging the palaces which fell in his way, and establishing Jacobin clubs in Frankfort and Mayence, than on prosecuting the military movements of the campaign. Meanwhile, the Prussians, observing the inactivity of the army of Kellermann, secretly drew their forces round Custine's corps, in the hope that, unsupported as it was, and far in advance, it might be made prisoners before any effectual succour could be detached to its support. The design, owing to the supineness of the commander of the French forces, had very nearly succeeded. For long, Custine disregarded the Prussian corps, which were gradually drawn round him, and was only awakened from his dream of security upon finding his sole remaining line of retreat threatened by the enemy. He then detached General Houchard with three thousand men, who had an unsuccessful action with the Prussians near Limburg; but shortly after, the arrival of twelve thousand men from the army of the Upper-Rhine put him in a condition to resume offensive operations (3).

Dec. 2. French recross the Rhine. Meanwhile the King of Prussia, finding himself at the head of a noble force of fifty thousand men, now in some measure recovered from their disasters, resolved to anticipate the enemy, and drive them from the right bank of the Rhine, in order to give his troops secure cantonments for the winter. With this view he put his army in motion, and directing the bulk of his forces against Custine's right flank, obliged him to retire to an intrenched camp behind the Nidda, leaving a garrison of 2000 men in Frankfort in a most precarious situation. The King immediately attempted a *coup de main* against that city, which completely succeeded, the whole garrison, with the exception of two hundred men, being either killed

(1) Ann. Reg. 1793, 134, 135, 140.

(2) Toul. iii. 105, 106. Jom. ii. 269, 272, 273.

(3) Jom. ii. 275, 279, 280. St.-Cyr. i. 9, 12. Toul. iii. 108.

or made prisoners. Custine, upon this disaster, after making a feeble attempt to defend the course of the Nidda, repassed the Rhine, and cantoned his troops between Bingen and Frankendal, leaving a garrison of ten thousand men to defend the important fortress of Mayence. On their side, the Allies also put their troops into winter quarters, of which they stood much in need, the line of their cantonments extending through Frankfort and Darmstadt, with an advanced guard to observe that frontier city (1).

Thus terminated the campaign of 1792, a period fraught with the most valuable instruction to the statesman and the soldier. Already the desperate and energetic character of the war was made manifest; the contagion of republican principles had gained for France many conquests, but the severity of republican rule had rendered the delusion, in the countries which they had overrun, as short-lived as it was fallacious. In many places their armies had been welcomed, upon their arrival, as deliverers; in none had they been regretted, on their departure, as friends. The campaign, which opened under such untoward auspices, had been marked by the most splendid successes on the part of the Republicans; but it was evident that their conquests had exceeded their strength, and it was remarked that at its close their affairs were declining in every quarter (2). In the north, the army of Dumouriez, which had just completed the conquest of Flanders, had fallen into the most disorderly state; whole battalions had left their colours, and returned home, or spread themselves in bands of robbers over the conquered territory; the horses and equipments were in wretched condition, and the whole army, weakened by license and insubordination, fast tending to decay. The armies of Beurnonville and Custine, paralysed by the division and inactivity of their chiefs, were in little better circumstances, and their recent failures had gone far to weaken the energetic spirit which their early successes had produced; while the troops who had overrun Savoy and Nice, a prey to their own disorders, were suffering under the consequences of the plunder and devastation which had inflicted such misery on the conquered districts (3).

But it was evident, from the events which had occurred, that the war was to exceed, in magnitude and importance, any which had preceded it, and that consequences, beyond all example momentous, were to follow its continuance. The campaign had only commenced in the beginning of August, and before the close of the year, an invasion, the most formidable which had ever threatened the existence of France, had been baffled, and conquests greater than any achieved by its preceding monarchs obtained. Flanders, the theatre of such obstinate contests in the reign of Louis XIV, had been overrun in little more than a fortnight; the Transalpine dominions of the house of Savoy severed from the Sardinian crown, and the great frontier city of Germany wrested from the empire, almost under the eyes of the Imperial and Royal armies. All this had been accomplished, too, under the greatest possible apparent disadvantages; the French armies had taken the field in a state of complete insubordination; disgrace and discomfiture had attended their first efforts; the kingdom was torn by intestine faction; a large portion of its nobility in the ranks of the invaders; and few of its generals had seen any service, or were in a condition to oppose the experienced tactics of the enemy.

But to these apparently overwhelming disadvantages, the French had to oppose elements hitherto unknown in modern warfare, the energy of repub-

(1) Jom. ii. 282, 292. Toul. iii. 116, 117. St.-Cyr. ii. 12, 16. Hard. ii. 77, 98.

(2) Jom. ii. 192.

(3) Jom. ii. 292, 317. Dum. iii. 230.

lican valour, and the vigour of democratic ambition. Experience soon demonstrated that these principles were more powerful than any which had yet been brought into action in human affairs, and that the strength they conferred would be equalled only by the development of passions as strong, and feelings as universal. The French triumphed as long as they contended with kings and armies; they fell, when their tyranny had excited the indignation, and their invasions roused the patriotism of the people.

But it was not *immediately* that this formidable power arose; and political lessons of the utmost moment, for the future guidance of mankind, may be gathered from the commencement of this memorable war.

1. The first conclusion which presents itself is the absolute necessity, in attacking a country in a state of revolution, of proceeding vigorously in the outset, and not suffering early success to convert democratic energy into military ambition. These two principles are nearly allied; the one rapidly passes into the other; but at first they are totally distinct. After a little success in war, a revolutionary state is the most formidable of all antagonists; before that has been obtained, it generally may, without much difficulty, be vanquished. No armies could be in a worse state than those of France at the commencement of the campaign of 1792, and the reason was, that the license of a Revolution had dissolved the bands of discipline; none could be more formidable than they were at Arcola, because success had then turned political fervour into the career of conquest. In attacking a revolutionary state, the only wise and really economical course is to put forth a powerful force at the outset, and never permit a transient success to elevate the spirits of the people. Bitterly did the Austrian and Prussian Governments regret the nigardly display of their strength at the commencement of the war. They could easily have then put forward a hundred thousand men for the invasion of Champagne, while sixty thousand advanced through Alsace, and as many from the Low-Countries. Two military monarchies, wielding a united force of above four hundred thousand men, could assuredly have made such an effort for a single campaign (1). What a multitude of evils would such an early exertion have saved; the French Conscription, the campaign of Moscow, the rout of Leipsic, the blood of millions, the treasures of ages!

2. Had the Allies duly improved their advantages at the outset, the Revolution might unquestionably have been vanquished in the first campaign. A little less delay in the advance to the Argonne forest, would have prevented the French from occupying, with their inexperienced force, its broken defiles, and compelled them to yield up the capital, or fight in the plains of Champagne, where the numerous cavalry of the Prussians would have proved irresistible; a little more vigour in pressing on the retreating column from Grandpré to Ste.-Menehould, would have dispersed the whole defending army, and converted the passion for freedom into that of terror. Fifteen hundred Prussian hussars there routed ten thousand of the best troops of France; the fate of Europe then hung on a thread; had the Duke of Brunswick fallen on the retiring army with a considerable force, it would have all dissolved, and the reign of the Revolution was at an end.

3. The occupation of the defiles of the Argonne forest by Dumouriez, has been the subject of the highest panegyric from military writers; but it brought France to the brink of ruin, by the peril to which his army was exposed in the subsequent retreat to Ste.-Menehould. A very competent authority, Marshal St.-Cyr, has censured it as a perilous and useless measure,

(1) Jom. i, 375, 386.

which, by dividing the French force in front of a superior enemy, exposed them to the risk of being beaten, and cut to pieces in detail (1). In truth, the inability of Dumouriez to defend the passes of that forest, adds one to the numerous instances on record, of the impossibility of defending a range of broken ground, however strong, against a superior and enterprising enemy. The reason is, that the defending force is necessarily divided to guard the different passes, whereas, the attacking may select their point of assault, and by bringing overwhelming numbers there, compel the abandonment of the whole line. This is just what Napoléon did in the Maritime Alps, Soult in the Pyrenees, and Diebitch in the Balkan. The only example of the successful maintenance of such a position is that of Wellington at Torres Vedras, but that was not the defence of a range of mountains, so much as a great intrenched camp adequately defended by field works at all points. Unquestionably, by keeping his forces together, Dumouriez would never have exposed them to the imminent hazard which occurred in the retreat of his detached columns from Grandpré to the camp in the rear, a movement which, if executed in presence of an enterprising enemy, would have proved fatal to France. Had Napoléon been in the Duke of Brunswick's place with so superior a force, he would speedily have penetrated through the other defiles of the Argonne forest, and compelled Dumouriez to lay down his arms in his impregnable camp.

4. The wretched condition and inglorious exploits of the French armies at the commencement of the war, is a striking proof of the extreme peril to national independence, which arises from soldiers taking any part in civil dissensions; and forgetting, for the transient applause of the multitude, the obedience and fidelity, which are the first of military virtues. The revolt of the French Guards, the vacillation of the army under Louis XVI., placed the national independence on the brink of ruin. The insubordination, the tumults, the indiscipline, consequent on such a revolt, dry up the sources of military prowess: till they are removed, the nation has no protection against its enemies. Let not future ages calculate upon again meeting with the genius of Dumouriez, or the timidity of the Duke of Brunswick: had matters been reversed, had the French commander headed the invaders, and the Prussian been intrusted with the defence, where would now have been the name or the independence of France? Internal despotism, and foreign subjugation, are the inevitable consequences of such breaches of military discipline. France tasted the bitterness of both, in consequence of the applauded revolt of her defenders; the Reign of Terror, the despotism of Napoléon, the capture of Paris, were its legitimate consequences. The French army preserved its honour unsullied, and maintained the virgin purity of the capital through all the perils of the monarchy: it lost both amidst the anarchy which followed the desertion of its duty on the rise of the Republic.

Lastly, from the glorious result of the generous efforts which the French people made to maintain their independence, after revolt had paralysed their regular defenders, the patriots of succeeding times may derive materials for encouragement even in the severest extremities of adverse fortune. No situation could well appear more desperate than that of France, after the fall of Longwy; with an insurgent capital, and a disunited people; pierced to the heart by an invading army, and destitute alike of experienced commanders and disciplined soldiers. Yet, from all these dangers was France

(1) St.-Cyr's Mem., i. 64, *et seq.*

delivered by the energy of its government, and the heroism of its inhabitants. From the extremity of peril at Grandpré, how rapid was the transition to security and triumph; to glories greater than those of Francis I; to conquests more rapid than those of Louis XIV—a striking example to succeeding ages of what can be effected by energy and patriotism; and of the rewards which await those who, disregarding the frowns of fortune, steadily adhere through all its vicissitudes to the discharge of duty.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.



# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

# FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.E.

ADVOCATE.

"*BELLUM maxime omnium memorabile quæ unquam gesta sint me scripturum ; quod Hannibale duce Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullas inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virtum aut roboris fuit : et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas primo Punico conserebant bello ; odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt quam viribus ; et adeo varia belli fortuna, ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt.*"—*TIT. LIV. lib. 21.*

VOL. II.



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## CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

---

### CHAPTER IX.

**FRENCH REPUBLIC—FROM THE DEATH OF THE KING TO THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS.**

State of Public feeling in Paris after the execution of the King—Retirement of Roland from the Girondist Ministry—Great effect of the commencement of the war—Vast increase in the powers of the Revolutionary Tribunal—General distress in Paris, and public clamour for a maximum on prices—Effort of Dumouriez to restore the Monarchy—His failure, and flight—Appointment of the Committee of Public Safety—Trial and Acquittal of Marat—Continued contest of the Girondists and Jacobins—Insurrection of 31st May—General attack on the Convention—The Girondists are given up to the populace—Their trial, execution, and heroic conduct on the scaffold.—P. 1—30.

### CHAPTER X.

**REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS TO THE DEATH OF DANTON.**

Government of the Jacobins—The Committee of Public Safety—Coalition of the Departments against their authority—Its speedy dissolution—Extreme and cruel measures every where put in force by the Jacobin clubs and authorities—Abolition of Sunday—Assassination of Marat by Charlotte Corday—Her execution—Arrest of seventy-three Members of the Convention—Cruel treatment of the Dauphin—Trial and Execution of Queen Marie-Antoinette—Destruction of the Monuments at St.-Denis—Fête of the Goddess of Reason—Universal abandonment of Religion, and closing of the Churches—Excessive Dissolution of Manners—Arrest and Death of Bailly, the Duke of Orléans, and all the Orléans party—Estrangement of the Dantonists, and Committee of Public Safety—Arrest, Trial, and Execution of Hébert, and the Anarchists, Danton, Camille-Desmoulins, and all their party.—P. 31—61.

### CHAPTER XI.

**CAMPAIGN OF 1793.—PART I.**

**FROM THE OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE FORCING OF THE CAMP OF CÆSAR.**

State of Opinion in Great-Britain on the War—Arguments in the Country and in Parliament on the subject—Mr. Grey's motion for Parliamentary Reform—Arguments for and against it—Traitorous Correspondence Act, and other coercive measures of the British Government—Preparations for War and Treaties of Alliance on the part of the Coalesced Powers—Divisions between the Prussians and Austrians—Military efforts of France—Battle of Nerwinde, and loss of Flanders by their Armies—Siege and Recapture of Mayence by the Imperialists—Congress at Antwerp regarding the prosecution of the War, and unhappy plans it adopted—Battle at Famars—Siege and Fall of Valenciennes—Rout in the Camp of Cæsar—Desperate situation of the Republicans.—P. 62—91.

## CHAPTER XII.

## WAR IN LA VENDÉE.

Local situation and aspect of la Vendée—Manners and Character of the Inhabitants prior to the Revolution—Causes which led to the Insurrection—Character of Larochejaquelein, Bonchamps, Lescure, Charette, and the other Chiefs—Their mode of fighting, and astonishing success—Repeated Victories of the Peasants, and their Capture of Saumur—Failure at Nantes, and Death of Cathelineau—General Invasion of the Bocage—Desperate Actions sustained by the Vendéens, and their final triumph—A Second Invasion leads to their defeat at Cholet—Passage of the Loire by the whole population—Repeated and surprising Successes in Brittany—Their Failure at Granville—Disastrous Retreat to the Loire—They are finally Routed at Mans and Savenay—Cruel executions which followed the Success of the Republicans—Anecdotes of Individual Heroism and Escapes.—P. 92—140.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1793.—PART II.

## FROM THE ROUT IN THE CAMP OF CÉSAR, TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

Vigorous Measures of Carnot and the Committee of Public Safety for the conduct of the War—Their vast levies and exertions—Change of Ministry at Vienna—Recognition of the Maritime Laws by the Allied Powers—Division of the Allied Forces in Flanders, and its disastrous effects—Defeat of the English at Dunkirk—Chequered fortune of the Imperialists—Their ultimate Defeat—Indecisive Campaign on the Rhine, occasioned by the Divisions of the Allies—Campaign on the Pyrenees and in the Maritime Alps—Insurrection at Lyon—Siege and Sufferings of that City—Its Fall—Delivery of Toulon to the English—Its Siege—Able measures of Napoléon for its Reduction—Burning of the Fleet and Arsenal, and Evacuation of the Place.—P. 141—175.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE DEATH OF DANTON TO THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE.

Political fanaticism of this sanguinary period—Characters of St.-Just and Couthon—Immense accumulation of captives in the prisons, and universal horror which there prevailed—Robespierre gradually reverts to more reasonable principles—Fête in honour of the Supreme Being—Cruelties in the provinces—Execution of Malesherbes, the Princess Elizabeth, and others—Horror generally excited by these atrocious Massacres—Fear excited in the Leaders of the Jacobins for their own Safety—Coalition of Parties against Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety—Debates in the Assembly—Arrest of Robespierre and his Party—Their deliverance—Struggle at the Hôtel-de-Ville—Their final seizure and execution.—P. 176—211.

## CHAPTER XV.

## INTERNAL STATE OF FRANCE DURING THE REIGN OF TERROR.

Vast exertions of the French Government during the Reign of Terror—Prodigious Issue of Assignats—Its Effects, Maximum on Prices, Robbery of the Cultivators for the support of the Populace in the cities—Forced Loans—Blending of the Revolutionary and old Debt—Excessive Severity on all classes of the measure to which the Government was driven—Grinding oppression of the Poor—Successive steps of the Revolution—Their progressive deterioration—Moral Law of Nature to which these changes were subjected.—P. 212—227.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1794.

Comparative situation of France and England at the opening of this year—Debates on the continuance of the war in Parliament—Naval operations—Lord Howe's Victory on 1st June—Vast preparations of France for the Campaign—Success in the outset of the Allies—Bloody but Indecisive Actions along the whole line—Separation of the Austrians and English, and Secret Resolution of the Former to abandon Flanders—Battle of Fleurus—Retreat of English towards Holland : of Imperialists to the Rhine—Savage orders of the Convention—Campaign in the Maritime Alps, and in the Pyrenees—Retreat of the English into Holland—Advances of the Republicans to Amsterdam in the depth of Winter—Allies driven over the Rhine into Germany—Renewal of the War in la Vendée, and Rise of the Chouan Corps.—P. 282—278.

CHAPTER XVII.

WAR IN POLAND.

Situation of the Country of Poland—Early Character of its Inhabitants—Causes which led to their singular prejudices and institutions—Ruinous Democratic Privileges of the Plebeian Noblesse—Sketch of their Constitution—Its History and continual Deterioration—John Sobiesky—His remarkable Prophecy on the future fate of his country—Increasing weakness of the State—Insurrection under Kosciuszko—Its early success, and ultimate overthrow—Storming of Warsaw by Suwarrow, and final Partition of Poland—Causes which led to this catastrophe—Prejudicial effect of the ambitious views of the Allies on Poland, upon the Coalition against France.—P. 279—301.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1795.

Peace between France and Prussia—Fresh Treaties between England and Austria and Russia—Arguments used in Parliament and elsewhere for and against the Continuance of the War—Operations in the Maritime Alps—Decisive battle of Loano—Campaign in the Eastern and Western Pyrenees, which terminates in the Submission of Spain, and a Treaty with France—Pacification of la Vendée—Expedition to Quiberon Bay—It lands, and terminates in Disaster—Massacre of the Prisoners there by the Republicans—Campaign on the Rhine—Fall of Luxembourg—Able operations of Clairfait at the Lines of Mayence—Declining situation of the Republican Affairs in every quarter, and internal Exhaustion of the Country.—P. 302—326.

CHAPTER XIX.

FRENCH REPUBLIC—FROM THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIRECTORY.

General reaction against the Reign of Terror after the Fall of Robespierre—Rise of the Thermidoriens and the Jeunesse dorée—Their Contests with the Revolutionists—Closing of the Hall of the Jacobins—Manners and Ideas at Paris during that period—Gradual abolition of the Revolutionary Measures—Impeachment of the remaining Jacobin Leaders—Revolt in Paris in consequence—Convention Besieged—The Insurgents are at length defeated—Disarming of the Faubourgs—Abolition of the Revolutionary Tribunal—Reaction in the South of France—Liberation of the Duchesse d'Angoulême—Formation of a Constitution—Its principal Features—The Project of Reappointing two-thirds of the Convention occasions great Discontent in Paris—Rapid progress of Royalist Principles—Agitation in the Capital—Revolt of the Sections—At first nearly Successful, but is at length defeated by Napoléon—Formation of the Council of the Ancients and the Five Hundred—Causes of the Disasters of the Revolution.—P. 327—359.



# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

## FRENCH REVOLUTION.

### CHAPTER IX.

FRENCH REPUBLIC—FROM THE DEATH OF THE KING TO THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS.

#### ARGUMENT.

General grief and consternation at the Death of Louis—It irrecoverably ruins the Girondists—Retirement of Roland from the Ministry of the Interior, who is succeeded by Garat—War with England, and Spain, and Holland—Prodigious effect of this event—Its prejudicial effect on the Royalist and constitutional cause—Plan for resisting the Allies adopted by the Jacobins—Establishment of the Revolutionary Tribunal—Great distress in Paris—Popular demands for a Law of the Maximum—Designs of Dumouriez—He resolves to re-establish the Monarchy—His failure, and flight—Contests between the Girondists and Jacobins—Abortive Conspiracy of the Jacobins—War breaks out in la Vendée—Vigorous measures of the Convention—Dumouriez denounced, and Committee of Public Safety appointed—Girondists and Centre send Marat to the Revolutionary Tribunal—Vehement agitation to counteract it—He is acquitted—Energetic proposal of Guadet—General Insurrection against the Girondists and the Convention—Desperate contest in the Assembly—Report of Garat declaring Paris in a state of Tranquillity—Insurrection renewed on May 31st—Vast force organized in the Faubourgs—They surround and assail the Convention—Vehement Debate within its Walls—They move out of the Hall; but are driven back by the armed Bands—The Thirty Leaders of the Gironde are given up, and put under Arrest—Many escape into the Provinces—Their Trial and Condemnation—Heroic Death—Trial and Death of Madame Roland—Her generous Conduct—Death of M. Roland—Reflections on the Fall of the Girondists.

THE death of Louis completed the destruction of the French monarchy. The Revolution had now run the first stage of such convulsions. Springing from philanthropic principles, cherished by patriotic feeling, supported by aristocratic liberality, indulged with royal favour, it had successively ruined all the classes who supported its fortunes. The clergy were the first to join its standard, and they were the first to be destroyed; the nobles then yielded to its fortunes, and they were the next to suffer; the King had proved himself the liberal benefactor of his subjects, and conceded all the demands of the revolutionists, and, in return, he was led out to the scaffold. It remained to be seen what was the fate of the victors in the strife; whether such crimes were to go unpunished; and whether the laws of Nature promised the same impunity to wickedness which they had obtained from human tribunals.

"Quid in rebus civilibus," says Bacon, "maxime prodest? Audacia. Quid secundum? Audacia. Quid tertium? Audacia. In promptu ratio est; inest enim naturæ humanæ, plerumque plus stulti quam sapientis, unde et facultates eæ, quibus capitur pars illa in animis mortalium stulta, sunt omnium potentissimæ. Attamen utcunque ignorantia et sordidi ingenii proles est Audacia, nihilominus fascinat et captivos ducit eos qui vel judicio infirmiores sunt vel animo timidiore; tales autem sunt hominum pars maxima." "Le canon que vous entendez," said Danton at the bar of the Assembly, "n'est pas le canon d'alarme; c'est le pas de charge sur nos ennemis. Pour les vaincre, pour les atterrer, que faut-il? De l'audace! encore de l'audace! toujours de l'audace!" It is not a little remarkable, that philosophical sagacity should have inspired to the sage of the sixteenth, not only the idea, but the very words, which a practical acquaintance with the storms of the Revolution suggested to the terrible demagogue of the nineteenth century (1).

Never was the truth of these memorable words more strongly demonstrated than in France during the progress of the Revolution. Rank, influence, talent, patriotism, abandoned the field of combat, or sunk in the struggle; daring ambition, reckless audacity, vanquished every opponent. The Girondists maintained that the force of reason, and of the people, was the same thing; and flattered themselves, that by their eloquence, they could curb the Revolution when its excesses became dangerous; they lived to experience their utter inability to contend with popular violence, and sunk under the fury of the tempest they had created.

The maxim, "Vox populi, vox Dei," is true only of the calm result of human reflection, when the period of agitation is passed, and reason has resumed its sway: so predominant is passion in moments of excitation, that it would be nearer the truth then to say, that the voice of the people is that of the demons who direct them. A horse, maddened by terror, does not rush more certainly on its own destruction, than the populace, when excited by revolutionary ambition. It is this law of Nature which provides its slow but certain punishment. To scourge each successive faction which attains the head of affairs, another more hardy than itself arises, until the punishment has reached all the guilty classes, and the nation, in sackcloth and ashes, has expiated its offences.

General consternation at the Death of Louis. The death of the King roused numbers, when too late, to the dangers of popular rule. Scarcely had his head fallen from the scaffold, when the public grief became visible: the brigands who were hired to raise cries of triumph, failed in rousing a voice among the spectators. The name of Santerre was universally execrated: "The King was about to appeal to us," said the people, "and we would have delivered him." Many dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood of the victim; his hair was religiously gathered and placed with the relics of saints, by the few who retained religious sentiments. The National Guards, silent and depressed, returned to their homes; throwing aside their arms, they gave vent, in the bosom of their families, to feelings which they did not venture to display in public. "Alas! if I had been sure of my comrades!" was the general expression; fatal effect of civil dissension, to paralyze the good from mutual distrust, and elevate the wicked from conscious audacity (2).

The execution was over at half-past ten; but the shops continued shut, and

(1) Bacon, x. 32. Mig. i. 204. Th. iii. 272.

(2) Lac. x. 256. Th. iv. 2.



the streets deserted, during the whole day. Paris resembled a city desolated by an earthquake. Groups of assassins alone were to be seen, singing revolutionary songs, the same as those which preceded the massacre of September. Their voices, re-echoed by the silent walls, reached the prison of the Temple, and first informed the royal family of the fate of the Sovereign. The Queen, with her orphan son, fell on their knees, and prayed that they might soon join the martyr in the regions of Heaven (1).

It irrever-  
ably ruined  
the Giron-  
dists.

The death of the King not only rendered the parties irreconcilable, but weakened the influence of the Girondists with the people. The Jacobins incessantly taunted them with having endeavoured to save the tyrant; the generous design could not be denied, and constituted an unpardonable offence in the eyes of the democratical party. They accused them of being enemies of the people, because they deprecated their excesses; accomplices of the tyrant, because they strove to save his life; traitors to the Republic, because they recommended moderation towards its opponents. Lest the absurdity of these reproaches should become manifest by the return of reason to the public mind, they adopted every means of continuing the popular agitation. To strike terror into the enemies of the Revolution; to keep awake the revolutionary fervour, by the exhibition of danger, and the fury of insurrections; to represent the safety of the Republic as solely dependent on their exertions; to electrify the departments by the aid of affiliated societies; such was the system which they incessantly pursued, till all their enemies were destroyed (2).

Retirement  
of Roland.

A temporary union of the contending parties took place, in consequence of the consternation produced by the death of one of the deputies, Lepelletier St.-Fargeau, who was murdered for voting against the life of the King, by an old member of the Garde-du-Corps, named Pâris. The condition of the truce was the dismissal of the upright and intrepid Roland from the Ministry of the Interior. He was succeeded by Garat, a man of a benevolent disposition, but no firmness of character, and totally disqualified for the perilous times in which his official duties commenced. By the retirement of Roland, the Girondists lost the only firm support of their party (3).

The Jacobins, to the last moment, were doubtful of the success of their attack upon the King. The magnitude of the attempt, the enormity of the crime, startled even their sanguinary minds; and their exultation was proportionally great at their unlooked for success. The Girondists, on the other hand, grieved for the illustrious victim, and, alarmed at the appalling success of their adversaries, perceived in the martyrdom of Louis the prelude to long and bloody feuds, and the first step in the inexorable system which so soon followed. They had abandoned Louis to his fate, to show that they were not Royalists; but the humiliating weakness deceived no one in the Republic. All were aware that they did so from necessity, not inclination; that fear had mastered their resolution; and that the appeal to the people was an attempt to devolve upon others a danger which they had not the vigour to face themselves. They lost in this way the confidence of every party: of the Royalists, because they had been the original authors of the revolt which dethroned the King; of the Jacobins, because they had recoiled from his execution. Roland, completely discouraged, not by personal danger, but the impossibility of

(1) Lac. x. 257.

(2) Mignet, i. 242. Th. iv. 2, 3.

(3) Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 50. Mignet. i. 243, 244.  
Toul. iii. 235. Th. iv. 3.

stemming the progress of disaster, was too happy at the prospect of escaping from his perilous eminence into the tranquillity of private life (1).

All parties were disappointed in the effect which they had anticipated from the death of the King. The Girondists, whose culpable declamations had roused the spirit which brought him to the block, had imagined that their ascendancy over the populace would be regained by their concurrence in this great sacrifice, and that they would prefer their conservative and moderate counsels to the fierce designs of their dreaded rivals, the Jacobins; but they were soon undeceived, and found to their cost that this act of iniquity, like all other misdeeds, rendered their situation worse than it had formerly been. The Orleanists lost by this terrible event the little consideration which they still possessed, and Philippe-Égalité, who had flattered himself that, by agreeing to it, he would secure the crown to himself and his descendants, was speedily overwhelmed in the shock of the more energetic and extreme factions who disputed the lead in public affairs. The Jacobins, with more reason, expected that the destruction of the throne would secure to them a long lease of power: and they did not enjoy it for eighteen months. France, overwhelmed by their tyranny, sought refuge from its horror, not in the vacillating hands of a benevolent monarch, but the stern grasp of a relentless warrior. Such is the march of revolutions: they never recede when their leaders obtain unresisted ascendancy, but are precipitated on, like the career of guilt in an individual, from one excess to another, till the extremity of suffering restores the lead to the classes qualified to take it, and expels the deadly poison of democracy from the social system (2).

The Girondists exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent Roland from retiring from the ministry of the Interior, but all their efforts were in vain. Even the influence of his beautiful and gifted wife was unable to retain him at his post. He declared that death would be preferable to the mortification he was daily obliged to endure. His party were in despair at his retirement, because they saw clearly the impossibility of supplying his place: they had become sensible of the ruinous tendency of their measures to their country and themselves, when it was no longer possible to remeasure their steps (3).

External events of no ordinary importance, occurred at this time, which precipitated the fall of this celebrated party, and accelerated the approach of the Reign of Terror.

War with  
England.

The first of these was the accession of England to the league of the Allied Sovereigns against the Republic. The execution of the King, as Vergniaud had predicted, at once dissolved the species of neutrality which subsisted between the rival states; Chauvelin, the French ambassador, received orders immediately to leave London, and this was succeeded, in a few days, by a declaration of war by the Convention against England, Feb. 1, 1793. Spain, and Holland;—against England, as having already virtually declared war by the dismissal of the French ambassador; against Holland, as in reality influenced by England; against Spain, as already a secret enemy. These declarations were followed by an order for the immediate levy of 300,000 men (4).

The effect of these measures throughout France was prodigious. "We thank you for having reduced us to the necessity of conquering," was the

(1) Th. iv. 2, 3. Buzot, 10—13.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. ii. 152, 115, 116.

(3) Hist. de la Conv. ii. 153.

(4) Lac. Pr. Hist. i. 51. Mign. i. 248. Th. iv. 13, 14.

answer of one of the armies to the Convention in reply to the announcement of the death of the King, and the declaration of war. And, in truth, these sentiments were universal in the armies, general among the people. The feeling of national honour, in all ages so powerful among the French, was awakened; the dominant party of the Jacobins at Paris no longer appeared in the light of a relentless faction, contending for power, but as a band of patriots, bravely struggling for national independence; resistance to their mandates seemed nothing short of treason to the commonwealth in its hour of danger. Every species of requisition was cheerfully furnished under the pressure of impending calamity; in the dread of foreign subjugation, the loss of fortune or employment was forgotten; one only path, that of honour, was open to the brave; one only duty, that of submission, remained to the good; and even the blood which streamed from the scaffold, seemed a sacrifice justly due to the offended Genius of patriotism, indignant at the defection of some of its votaries (1).

Prodigious Effect of this Event. The Royalist, Constitutional, and Moderate, parties, were never again able to separate the cause of France from that of the Jacobins, who then ruled its destinies. The people, ever led by their feelings, and often incapable of just discrimination, though when not actuated by wicked leaders, in the end generally true to the cause of virtue, constantly associated the adherents of these parties with the enemies of the Republic; the Royalists, because they fought in the ranks of the Allies, and combated the Republic in la Vendée; the Constitutionalists, because they entered into negotiations with the enemies of the state, and sought the aid of foreign armies to restore the balance of domestic faction; the Moderate, because they raised their voices against internal tyranny, and sought to arrest the arm of power in the effusion of human blood. The party which becomes associated in the mind of the people, with indifference to the fate of the country in periods of danger, can never, during the subsistence of that generation, regain its influence; and the opposition to the ruling power during such a crisis, can hardly avoid such an imputation. By a singular coincidence, but from the influence of the same principle, the opposition, both in France and England, at this period, lost their hold of the influential part of the nation, from the same cause; the French Royalists, because they were accused of coalescing with foreign powers against the integrity of France; the English Whigs, because they were suspected of indifference to national glory in the contest with continental ambition (2).

Its prejudicial Effect on the Royalist and Constitutional cause. The French leaders were not insensible to the danger arising from the attack of so formidable a coalition; but retreat was become impossible. By the execution of Louis, they had come to a final rupture with all established governments. The revolt of the 10th August, the massacres in the prisons, the death of the King, had excited the most profound indignation among all the aristocratic portion of society throughout Europe, and singularly cooled the ardour of the middling ranks in favour of the Revolution. The Jacobins were no longer despised by the European powers, but feared; and terror prompts more vigorous efforts than contempt. But the republican leaders at Paris did not despair of saving the cause of democracy. The extraordinary movement which agitated France gave them good grounds for hoping that they might succeed in raising the whole male population for

(1) Toul. iii. 236, 237. Th. iv. 4, 5.

(2) Lac. iii. 237. Nig. i. 248.

its defence, and that thus a much greater body might be brought into the field than the Allies could possibly assemble for their subjugation. The magnitude of the expense was to them a matter of no consequence. The estates of the emigrants afforded a vast and increasing fund, which greatly exceeded the amount of the public debt; while the boundless issue of assignats, at whatever rate of discount they might pass, amply provided for all the present or probable wants of the treasury (1).

The difficulty of procuring subsistence, and the total stagnation of commerce, the unavoidable result of revolutionary convulsions, increased to a most alarming degree during the months of February and March 1793. Dread of pillage, repugnance on the part of the cultivators to sell their produce for payment in the depreciated currency, which necessarily resulted from the unlimited issues of assignats, rendered abortive all the efforts of the government to supply the public necessities. At the same time, the price of every article of consumption increased so immensely, as excited the most vehement clamours among the people. The price, not only of bread, but of sugar, coffee, candles, and soap, had more than doubled since the Revolution commenced. Innumerable petitions on this subject succeeded each other at the bar of the Assembly. The most violent of the Jacobins had a remedy ready; it was to proclaim a maximum for the price of every article, lay a forced tax on the rich, and hang all persons who sold at a higher price than that fixed by law. In vain Thuriot and a few of the more educated of the party, raised their voices against these extreme measures; they were assailed with cries against the *shopkeeper aristocracy*, their voices drowned by hisses from the galleries; and the Mountain itself found that resisting such proceedings would speedily render them as unpopular as the Girondists had already become. The people now declared that the leaders they had selected were as bad as the old nobles. Perhaps the greatest and most ruinous delusion in such convulsions is the common opinion, that, by selecting their rulers from their own body, the labouring classes will find them more inclined to sympathize with their distresses, than if taken from a more elevated class; a natural but pernicious opinion, which all history proves to be fallacious, and which the common proverb, as to the effect of setting a beggar on horseback, shows to be adverse to the common experience of mankind (2).

At length the extreme difficulty of procuring subsistence, roused the people to a perfect fury. A tumultuous mob surrounded the hall of the Jacobins, and treated that body as they had so often treated the Assembly. The object was to procure a petition from them to the Convention, to procure the imposition of a maximum. The demand was refused;—instantly, cries of, "Down with the forestallers, down with the rich," resounded on all sides; and the Jacobins were threatened as they had threatened the Convention. Marat, the following morning, published a number of his *Journal*, in which, raising his powerful voice against what he called "the monopolists, the merchants of luxury, the supporters of fraud, the ex-nobles;" he added, "In every country where the rights of the people are not a vain title, the pillage of a few shops, at the doors of which they hung their forestalling owners, would put an end to an evil which reduces five millions of men to despair, and daily causes thousands to die of famine. When will the deputies of the people,

(1) Th. iv. 16, 18.

(2) Th. iv. 39, 41. Hist. de la Conv. ii. 264.

learn to act, without eternally haranguing on evils they know not how to remedy (1)?"

Encouraged by these exhortations, the populace were not slow in taking the redress of their wrongs into their own hands. A mob assembled, and pillaged a number of shops in the streets of la Vieille-Monnaie, Cinq-Diamans, and Lombards. They next insisted that every article of commerce should be sold at half its present price, and large quantities were seized in that manner at a ruinous loss to the owners. Speedily, however, they became tired of paying at all, and the shops were openly pillaged, without any equivalent (2).

All the public bodies were filled with consternation at these disorders. The shopkeepers, in particular, whose efforts in favour of the Revolution had been so decided at its commencement, were in despair at the approach of anarchy to their own doors. The Girondists, who were for the most part the representatives of the commercial cities of France, were fully alive to the disastrous effects of a maximum in prices; but when they attempted to enforce their principles, they were universally assailed by the populace, and their efforts in this particular destroyed all the little consideration which still remained to them. Nor were the Jacobins more successful in their exertions in this respect. The suffering was real and universal: nothing could make the people see it was owing to the measures of the Revolution. The attempts of the Municipality to restore order, or pass coercive regulations, were drowned in the cries of the multitude, and the hisses of the galleries; every new act of violence which was recounted, was received with shouts of applause. Neither at the Convention, nor the Hotel-de-Ville, nor the Jacobins, could any remedy be devised for the fury of the people. Robespierre, St.-Just, Chaumette, were hooted down the moment they attempted to speak. The Royalists contrasted these deplorable scenes with the tranquillity enjoyed under the monarchy. "Behold," said the Girondists, "to what we are fast driving under the system of popular violence."—"It is all," said the Jacobins, "the work of Royalists, Rolandists, Girondists, and partisans of La Fayette, in disguise." Robespierre maintained in the evening, at the Jacobins, the popular doctrine, "that the people could do no wrong," and that the Royalists were the secret instigators of all the disorders (3).

The alarm in Paris soon became extreme: all the public bodies declared their sittings permanent; the générale everywhere called the armed sections to their posts, and the people openly talked of the necessity of a new insurrection to "lop off the gangrened parts of the National Representation." The Girondists, who were the first likely to suffer, assembled, armed, at the house of Valazé, one of their number, where indecision and distraction of opinion paralyzed all their counsels. The Jacobins were hardly less embarrassed than themselves. Though supported by the Municipality, the majority of the sections, or National Guard, and the armed multitude, they did not conceive the public mind yet ripe for a direct attack on the National Representatives, where the Girondists still held the important offices. They resolved, therefore, to limit their demands to minor points, preparatory to the grand attack which was to overthrow their adversaries (4).

The other event which consolidated the influence of the Jacobins in the

(1) Journal de la République, 25th Feb. 1793.  
Th. iv. 43, 44.

(2) Th. iv. 46.

(3) Th. iv. 47, 48. Hist. de la Conv. ii. 163.

(4) Th. iv. 50, 55.

<sup>Designs of Dumouriez.</sup> metropolis, was the unsuccessful attempt of Dumouriez to restore the Constitutional Throne. This celebrated General, who was attached to the principles of the Girondists, had long been dissatisfied with the sanguinary proceedings, and still more sanguinary declarations of the democratical leaders, and saw no safety for France, but in the re-establishment of the Constitution of 1791. He left the command of his army, and came to Paris, in order to endeavour to save the life of Louis, and when that project failed, returned to Flanders, and entered into negotiations with Holland and Great Britain. His design was to make an irruption into Holland, overturn the Revolutionary authorities in that country; to form a new government in the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, and raise an army of eighty thousand men; to offer the alliance of this state to the French government, on condition of their restoring the Constitution of 1791; and, in case of refusal, to march to Paris with his own forces, and those of the Belgians, and overturn the Convention and the rule of the Jacobins (1).

Full of this extraordinary project, Dumouriez, at the head of fifteen thousand men, threw himself into Holland. He was at first successful, and succeeded in obtaining possession of Breda and Gertruydenberg; but while prosecuting his career, intelligence was received of the rout of the French army besieging Maestricht, and orders were given for the immediate return of the victorious army to cover the frontiers. So great was the consternation in the Republican troops, that whole battalions disbanded themselves, and some of the fugitives fled as far as Paris, spreading the most exaggerated reports wherever they went. In obedience to his orders, Dumouriez returned to Flanders, and fought a general action with Prince Cobourg; but the allies were successful, and the victory of Nerwinde compelled the French to abandon all their conquests in Flanders (2).

These events, the details of which belong to another chapter, occasioned an immediate rupture between this General and the Jacobins. Shortly after the battle, he wrote a letter to the Convention, in which he drew too faithful a picture of their government, accusing them of all the anarchy and disorders which had prevailed, and declaring them responsible for the safety of their more moderate colleagues. This letter was suppressed by the government; but it was circulated in Paris, and produced the greatest sensation. Danton returned to the capital from the army, and openly denounced the "Traitor, Dumouriez," at the club of the Jacobins; his head was loudly called for as a sacrifice to national justice; and the agitation occasioned by the public disasters, was incessantly kept alive by the circulation of the most gloomy reports (3).

Impelled by the imminent danger of his own situation, dissatisfied with the measures of the Convention, who had both thwarted his political wishes, and withered his military laurels; chagrined at the conduct of the government to the Belgians, who had capitulated on the faith of his assurances, and had subsequently been cruelly treated by their conquerors, Dumouriez entered into a correspondence with the Allied Generals. In the prosecution of this design, he neither acted with the vigour nor the caution requisite to ensure success; to his officers, he openly spoke of marching to Paris, as he had recently before spoken of marching to Brussels; while the soldiers were left to the seductions of the Jacobins, who found in them the willing instru-

(1) Dam. ii. 287. Toul. iii. 256, 260. Mign. i. 249, 250. Roland. i. 217.

(2) Lac. ii. 53, 55, 56. Mign. i. 250.

(3) Toul. iii. 293. Mig. i. 251. Th. iv. 112, 113.

ments of their ambitious designs. Dumouriez, as he himself admits, had not the qualities requisite for the leader of a party; but, even if he had possessed the energy of Danton, the firmness of Bouillé, or the ambition of Napoléon, the current of the Revolution was then too strong to be arrested by any single arm. Like La Fayette and Pichegru, he was destined to experience the truth of the saying of Tacitus, "*Bellis civilibus plus militibus quam ducibus licere.*" His power, great while wielding the force of the democracy, crumbled when applied to coerce its fury; and the leader of fifty thousand men, speedily found himself deserted and proscribed in the midst of the troops whom he had recently commanded with despotic authority (1).

The first intimation which the Convention received of his designs, was from the General himself. Three determined Jacobins, Proly, Pereira, and Dubuisson, had been sent to head-quarters to obtain authentic accounts of his intentions: in a long and animated discussion with them, he openly avowed his views, and threatened the Convention with the vengeance of his army. "No peace!" he exclaimed, "can be made for France, if we do not destroy the Convention; as long as I have a sword to wield, I shall strive to overturn its rule, and the sanguinary tribunal which it has recently created. The Republic is a mere chimera; I was only deceived by it for three days; we must save our country, by re-establishing the throne, and the Constitution of 1791. Ever since the battle of Jemmapes, I have never ceased to regret the triumphs obtained in so bad a cause. What signifies it whether the King is named Louis, James, or Philip? If the lives of the prisoners in the Temple are endangered, France will still find a Sovereign, and I will instantly march to Paris to avenge their death (2)."

To the imprudence of this premature declaration, Dumouriez, with that mixture of warmth and facility which distinguished his character, added the still greater fault of letting the commissioners, thus possessed of his intentions, depart for Paris, where they lost no time in informing the Convention of the danger which threatened them. Instant measures were taken to counteract the designs of so formidable an opponent. Proceeding with the decision and rapidity which, in civil dissensions, is indispensable to success, they summoned him to appear at their bar, and on his failure to obey, dispatched four commissioners, with instructions to bring him before them, or arrest him in the middle of his army. Dumouriez received these representatives in the midst of his staff; they read to him the decree of the Assembly, commanding his instant attendance at their bar; he refused to comply, alleging, as an excuse, the important duties with which he was intrusted, and promising to render an account of his proceedings at some future time. The representatives urged, as a reason for his submission, the example of the Roman Generals. "We deceive ourselves," replied he, "in alleging as an apology for our crimes, the virtues of the ancients. The Romans did not murder Tarquin; they established a Republic, governed by wise laws; they had neither a Jacobin club, nor a Revolutionary Tribunal. We live in the days of anarchy; tigers demand my head; I will not give it them."—"Citizen General," said Garnier, the leading representative, "will you obey the decree of the Convention, and repair to Paris?"—"Not at present," replied Dumouriez.—"I declare you then suspended from your functions, and order the soldiers to arrest your person."—"This is too much," exclaimed the

(1) Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 44. Lac. ii. 256, and 56. (2) Mig. i. 256. Lac. ii. 57. Toul. ii. 294, 306. Mig. i. 258.

General; and calling in his hussars, he arrested the representatives of the Convention, and delivered them as hostages to the Austrian General (1).

He resolves  
to re-esta-  
blish the  
Monarchy.

The die being now cast, Dumouriez prepared to follow up his design of establishing a Constitutional monarchy. Public opinion, in his army, was strongly divided; the corps attached to his person, were ready to go all lengths in his support; those of an opposite tendency, regarded him as a traitor; the majority, as in all civil convulsions, were indifferent, and ready to side with the victorious party. But the General wanted the firm hand requisite to guide a revolutionary movement, and the feelings of the most energetic of his soldiers were hostile to his designs.

His failure  
and flight.

He set out for Condé, with the intention of delivering it to the Austrians according to agreement, as a pledge of his sincerity; but having encountered a body of troops, adverse to his designs, he was compelled to take to flight, and only escaped by abandoning his horse, which refused to leap a ditch. With heroic courage, he endeavoured, the following day, with an escort of Austrian hussars, to regain his camp; but the sight of the foreign uniforms roused the patriotic feelings of the French soldiers; the artillery first abandoned his cause, and, soon after, their example was followed by the whole infantry. Dumouriez, with difficulty, regained the Austrian lines, where fifteen hundred followers only joined his standard. The remainder of the army collected in an entrenched camp at Famars, where, shortly after, General Dampierre, by authority of the Convention, assumed the command (2).

Contests be-  
tween the  
Girondists  
and Jaco-  
bins.

The failure of this, as of every other unsuccessful conspiracy, added to the strength of the ruling party in the French capital. Terror, often greatest when the danger is past, prepared the people to take the most desperate measures for the public safety; the defection of Dumouriez to the Austrians, gave the violent revolutionists the immense advantage of representing their adversaries as, in reality, enemies to the cause of France. During the first fervour of the alarm, the Jacobins denounced their old enemies, the Girondists, as the authors of all the public calamities, and actually fixed the 10th March for a general attack upon the leaders of that party in the bosom of the Convention. The Assembly had declared its sittings permanent, on account of the public dangers; and, on the evening of the 9th, it was determined, at the Club of the Jacobins, and the Cordeliers, on the following day, to close the barriers, to sound the tocsin, and march in two columns with the forces of the Faubourgs upon the Convention. At the appointed hour, the leaders of the insurrection repaired to their posts; but the Girondists, informed of their danger, abstained from joining the Assembly at the dangerous period; the Sections and National Guard hesitated to join the insurgents; Beurnonville, minister of war, marched against the Faubourgs at the head of a faithful battalion of troops from Brest, and a heavy rain cooled the revolutionary ardour of the multitude. Pétion, looking at the watery sky, exclaimed, "It will come to nothing; there will be no insurrection to night." The plot failed, and its failure postponed, for a few weeks, the commencement of the Reign of Terror. By such slender means was it possible, at that period, to arrest the disorders of the Revolution; and on such casual incidents did the most momentous changes depend (3).

(1) Lac. ii. 57. Mig. i. 257, 258. Toul. iii. 311, 312. Th. iv. 118, 119.

(2) Toul. iii. 313, 316, 320. Mig. i. 258. Lac. ii. 61, 62. Th. iv. 120—125.

(3) Mig. i. 251. Lac. ii. 62, 65. Th. iv. 76.



Establishment of the Revolutionary Tribunal, 9th March.

Danton and the Jacobins made an immediate use of the agitation produced by these events, to urge the establishment of a REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL, "in order to defend from internal enemies the relations of those who were combating foreign aggression on the frontiers." The Girondists exerted themselves to the utmost to resist this institution, as arbitrary as it threatened to be formidable. But their efforts were in vain; the public mind, violently shaken by the dread of domestic treason, was inaccessible to the apprehension of sanguinary rule. All that they could effect was in the end to introduce juries into the new court, and to moderate, to a certain degree, the violence of its proceedings until the fatal insurrection which subjected themselves to its terrors (1).

At the same time, another decree was passed, which imposed upon all proprietors an extraordinary war-tax; a third, which organized forty-one commissions, of two members each, to go down to the departments, armed with full powers to enforce the recruiting, disarm the refractory, seize all the horses destined for the purposes of luxury: in a word, exert the most despotic authority. These commissioners generally exercised their powers with the utmost rigour; and being armed with irresistible authority, and supported by the whole revolutionary party, laid the foundations of that iron net in which France was enveloped during the Reign of Terror (2).

Abortive conspiracy of the Jacobins.

The conspirators, astonished at the absence of the Girondists during the critical period, broke out into the loudest invectives against them for their defection. "They were constantly at their posts," they exclaimed, "when the object was to save Louis Capet; but they hid themselves when the country was at stake. On the following day, all Paris resounded with the failure of the conspiracy; and Vergniaud, taking advantage of the general consternation, denounced in the Convention the Committee of Insurrection which had projected the massacre, and moved that the papers of the Clubs should be seized, and the members of the committee arrested. "We march," he exclaimed, "from crimes to amnesties, and from amnesties to crimes. The great body of citizens are so blinded by their frequent occurrence, that they confound these seditious disturbances with the grand national movement in favour of freedom, regard the violence of brigands as the efforts of energetic minds, and consider robbery itself as indispensable for public safety. You are free, say they; but unless you think like us, we will denounce you as victims to the vengeance of the people; you are free, but unless you bow before the idol which we worship, we will deliver you up to their violence; you are free, but unless you join us in persecuting those whose probity or talents we dread, we will abandon you to their fury. Citizens, there is too much reason to dread *that the Revolution, like Saturn, will successively devour all its progeny, and finally leave only despotism, with all the calamities which it produces.*" These prophetic words produced some impression; but, as usual, the Assembly did nothing adequate to arrest the evils which they anticipated. Some of the conspirators were brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, but their trials led to nothing (3).

War in la Vendée breaks out.

The Jacobins were for a moment disconcerted by the failure of this conspiracy, but the war in la Vendée, which broke out about this period, and rapidly made the most alarming progress, soon reinvested them with their former ascendancy over the populace. The peculiar cir-

(1) Mig. i. 248, 249. Th. iv. 66.

(2) Ibid. iv. 66.

(3) Mig. i. 252. Th. iv. 78. Lac. ii. 64.

cumstances of this district, its simple manners, patriarchal habits, remote situation, and resident proprietors; rendered it the natural centre of the Royalist spirit, which the execution of Louis had roused to the highest degree throughout all France. The nobles and clergy not having emigrated from its provinces, were there in sufficient force to counterbalance the influence of the towns, and raise the standard of revolt. The two most powerful passions of the human mind, religious fanaticism and popular ambition, were rapidly brought into collision; a war of extermination was the result, and a million of Frenchmen perished in the strife of the factions contending for their dominion (1).

Vigorous  
measures of  
the Conven-  
tion.

Assailed by so many foreign and domestic dangers, the Convention adopted the most energetic measures, and the Jacobins resorted to their usual means to agitate and sway the public mind. The powers of the Revolutionary Tribunal were augmented; instead of proceeding on a decree of the Convention, as the warrant for judging of an accused person, it was empowered to *accuse* and *judge* at the same time. All the Sans-Culottes were ordered to be armed with a pike and a fusil, at the expense of the opulent classes; a forced loan was exacted from those persons possessed of any property, and revolutionary taxes levied in every department, according to the pleasure of the Revolutionary Commissioners. The Commune of Paris demanded the imposition of a maximum on the price of provisions, a demand certain of popularity with the lower orders, and the refusal of which increased their dissatisfaction with the measures of the Convention (2).

Meanwhile, the democrats were not slow in taking advantage of the increasing agitation of the public mind to improve the great victory they had recently gained by the establishment of a Revolutionary Tribunal. Agitation, as usual, was resorted to; a repast was provided for the people at the Halle-aux-Blé; and the galleries were filled with the partisans of the Jacobins, heated with wine, and prepared to applaud every extravagance of their leaders. Lindet read the *projet* of a law for the regulation of the new Tribunal; it bore that it should be composed of nine members, appointed by the Convention, liberated from all legal forms, authorized to convict on any evidence, divided into two permanent divisions, and entitled to prosecute either on the requisition of the Convention, or of their own authority, all those who, either by their opinions misled the people, or by the situations they occupied under the old *régime* recalled the usurped privileges of despots (3).

March 10. When this appalling *projet* was read, the most violent murmurs broke out on the right, which were speedily drowned in the loud applauses of the galleries and the left. "I would rather die," exclaimed Vergniaud, "than consent to the establishment of a Tribunal worse than the Venetian Inquisition."—"Take your choice," answered Amar, "between such a measure and an insurrection."—"My inclination for Revolutionary power," said Cambon, "is sufficiently known; but if the people may be deceived in their elections, are not we equally likely to be mistaken in the choice we make of the judges? and if so, what insupportable tyrants shall we then have created for ourselves!" The tumult became frightful; the evening approached; the Assembly, worn out with exertion, were yielding to violence: the members of the Plain were beginning to retire, and the Jacobins loudly calling for a decision by open vote, when Féraud exclaimed, "Yes, let us give our votes

(1) Lac. ii. 63, 64. Mlg. i. 252, 253.

(2) Lac. ii. 65, 66.

(3) Th. iv. 70.

publicly, in order that we may make known to the world the men who would assassinate innocence under cover of the law." This bold apostrophe recalled the yielding centre to their post; and, contrary to all expectation, it was resolved "that the trials should take place by jury; that the jurors should be chosen from the departments, and that they should be named by the Convention (1)."

After this unexpected success, the Girondists proposed that the Assembly should adjourn for an hour; but Danton, who was fearful lest the influence of terror and agitation should subside even in that short interval, raised his powerful voice. "I summon," said he, in a voice of thunder, "all good citizens to take their places. We must instantly terminate the formation of these laws destined to strike terror into the internal enemies of the Revolution. They must be arbitrary, because they cannot be precise; because how terrible soever they may be, they are preferable to those popular executions which now, as in September, would be the consequence of any delay in the execution of justice. After having organized this Tribunal, we must organize an energetic executive power, which may be in immediate contact with you, and put at your disposal all your resources in men and money. Let us profit by the errors of our predecessors, and do that which the Legislative Assembly has not ventured to do: there is no medium between ordinary forms and a Revolutionary Tribunal. Let us be terrible to prevent the people from becoming so: let us organize a tribunal, not which shall do good, that is impossible, but which shall do the least evil that is possible, to the effect that the sword of the law may descend upon all its enemies. To-day, then, let us complete the Revolutionary Tribunal, to-morrow, the executive power, and the day after, the departure of our commissioners for the departments. Calumniate me if you will, but let my memory perish provided the republic is saved (2)." The Assembly, overwhelmed by terror, invested the new tribunal with the despotic powers which were afterwards exercised with such ruinous effect on most of its own members (3).

No sooner was the arrest of the National Commissioners of the Convention known at Paris, than the Convention declared its sittings permanent, denounced Dumouriez as a traitor, fixed a price on his head, banished the Duke of Orléans and all the Bourbons, and created the famous COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, destined to complete the crimes, and destroy the authors of the Revolution (4). Though the

(1) Th. iv. 71, 72.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. Lac. ii. 202. iv. 72, 73.  
Hist. de la Conv. ii. 209, 210.

(3) The Decree of the Convention was in these terms: "There shall be established at Paris an Extraordinary Criminal Revolutionary Tribunal. It shall take cognizance of every attempt against liberty, equality, the unity or indivisibility of the Republic, the internal or external security of the state, of all conspiracies tending to the re-establishment of Royalty, or hostile to the sovereignty of the people, whether the accused are public functionaries, civil or military, or private individuals. The members of the jury shall be chosen by the Convention: the judges, the public accuser, the two substitutes, shall be named by it: the Tribunal shall decide on the opinion of the majority of the jury: the decision of the Court shall be without appeal, and the effects of the condemned shall be confiscated to the Republic."—The Girondists laboured hard

to introduce the clause allowing the members of the Convention to be tried in that court, with a view to the trial of Marat before it: the same clause was afterwards made the means of conducting almost all of themselves to the scaffold.—See Hist. de la Conv. ii. 209, 210.

(4) The Decree establishing the Committee of Public Safety was in these terms:—"The committee shall be composed of twenty-five members: it shall be charged with the preparation of laws, and all measures, exterior and interior, necessary for the safety of the Republic. The Committee shall call to its meetings all the ministers composing the executive authority, at least twice a-week. It shall render an account to the Convention whenever required to do so, and inform it weekly of the state of the Republic, and of that of all matters connected with it which should be divulged."—See Hist. de la Conv. i. 227.

Girondists concurred in these measures as warmly as the Jacobins, yet they were accused of a secret leaning towards the rebellious general, and this, on the alarm following his defection, became a powerful engine in the hands of their adversaries. Robespierre accused by name Brissot, Guadet, Vergniaud, Pétion, and Gensonné, in the Convention, while Marat denounced them in the popular societies. As President of the Society of Jacobins, he wrote a circular to the departments in which he invoked "the thunder of accusations and petitions against the traitors and unworthy delegates, who had strove to save the tyrant by voting for the appeal to the people (1)."

Fouquier-Tinville was the public accuser in the Revolutionary Tribunal; and his name soon became as terrible as that of Robespierre to all France. He was born in Picardy, and exhibited a combination of qualities so extraordinary, that, if it had not been established by undoubted testimony, it would have been deemed fabulous. Sombre, cruel, suspicious, the implacable enemy of merit or virtue of any kind, ever ready to aggravate the sufferings of innocence, he appeared insensible to every sentiment of compassion or equity. Justice in his eyes consisted in condemning; an acquittal was the source of profound vexation: he was never happy unless he had secured the conviction of all the accused. He exhibited in the pursuit of this object an extraordinary degree of ardour: he seemed to consider his personal credit as involved in the decision on their guilt: their firmness and calm demeanour in presence of their judges inspired him with transports of rage. But with all this hatred for all that is most esteemed among men, he showed himself equally insensible to the attractions of fortune, or the sweetnesses of domestic life. He required no species of recreation: women, the pleasures of the table, of the theatre, were alike indifferent to him. Sober and sparing in diet, he never indulged in any Bacchanalian excess, excepting when with the Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal he celebrated what they termed a *feu de file*: that was, a sitting at which all the accused were condemned: he then gave way to intemperance. His power of undergoing fatigue was unbounded: he was seldom to be seen at the clubs or any public meeting: the Revolutionary Tribunal was the theatre of all his exertions. The sole recreation which he allowed himself was to behold his victims perish on the scaffold: he confessed that that spectacle had great attractions. He might, during the period of his power, have amassed an immense fortune: he remained to the last poor, and is said to have died of famine. His lodgings were destitute of every comfort: their whole furniture after his death did not sell for twenty pounds. No seduction could influence him: he was literally a bar of iron against all the ordinary desires of men. Nothing roused his mind but the prospect of inflicting death, and then his animation was such that his countenance became radiant and expressive (2).

The infatuation of the Girondists hourly increased. The city of Paris was daily becoming more menacing, at least in its active and influential masses, and yet they blindly reckoned on their inviolability under the constitution, which they had so manifestly violated in the case of the King. This was the more extraordinary, as Robespierre began now openly to act on that plan, which he never ceased to pursue till all his enemies were destroyed. This design consisted, in the first instance, in getting quit of the Girondists by means of the Mountain; and secondly, in destroying by its influence all per-

(1) Mig. i. 258, 259. Th. iv. 131, 145.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. ii. 215, 217.

sons of the ancient regime, who, either by their rank, their fortune, or their virtues, were fitted to give him any umbrage. He required to level all the heads which rose above his own, and among these he had already marked out Philippe-Égalité as his first victim, the Queen as the next; and having accomplished these objects, his last object was to decimate the Mountain itself, so that no rival who could give him inquietude should be permitted to exist. At the same time, he persecuted with relentless vigour all the military leaders who had acquired any eminence, being well aware that it was among them that his most formidable rival was likely to arise. Inconceivable as such a plan appears, nothing is more certain than that it existed, and the event will show how very near it was being carried into complete execution (1).

The infatuation of the Girondists was chiefly founded on the immense majority by which they had recently secured the election of Pétion as mayor of Paris, in opposition to both Robespierre and Danton. The former had only 23 votes; the latter, 11; while Pétion had 14,000. It is not surprising that with this majority they conceived themselves in a situation to brave the populace. The event soon showed on what fallacious grounds their reliance was placed (2).

Girondists send Marat to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The Convention felt the necessity of making an effort to resist the inflammatory proceedings of the Jacobins. By an united effort of the Girondists and neutral party, Marat was sent for trial to the Revolutionary Tribunal, on the charge of having instigated the people to demand the punishment of the National Representatives. This was the first instance of the inviolability of the Convention being broken through, and, as such, it afforded an unfortunate precedent, which the sanguinary party were not slow in following. Yet the accusation of Marat was in reality no violation of the privileges of the Assembly. He was sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, not for what he said or did in the Convention, but for a circular addressed to the departments, as President of the Jacobin Club; and it was never supposed that the members of the Assembly were privileged to commit treason without its walls (3).

Vehement agitation to counteract it. The Jacobins lost no time in adopting measures to counteract this vigorous step. The clubs, the multitude, and the centre of insurrection, the Municipality, were put in motion. The whole force of popular agitation was called forth to save, as they expressed it, "that austere profound philosopher, formed by meditation and misfortune, gifted with such profound sagacity, and so great a knowledge of the human heart, who alone penetrated the designs of traitors on their triumphal cars, at the moment when the stupid vulgar were still loading them with applause." Pache, the Mayor of Paris, appeared at the bar of the Assembly, to demand, in the name of five-and-thirty Sections, and of the Commune, the expulsion of the leaders of the Gironde. The young and generous Boyer Fonfrede demanded to be included in the list of the proscribed; an act of devotion which subsequently cost him his life. All the members of the right and centre rose, and insisted upon being joined with their colleagues in the accusation. The petition was rejected, but the designs of its authors were gained; it accustomed the people to the spectacle of the Convention being besieged by popular clamour, and impaired the majesty of the legislature, by exhibiting the impunity with which its members might be assailed (4).

(1) Hist. de la Conv. ii. 192.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. i. 130.

(3) Toul. iv. 339. Th. iv. 150.

(4) Toul. iii. 339, 340. Mig. i. 259. Th. iv. 150. Lac. ii. 67.

He is acquitted.

Marat was accompanied to the Revolutionary Tribunal by the whole leaders of the Jacobin party. He was acquitted, and brought back in triumph to the Assembly. An immense multitude came with him to the gates; the leaders of the mob entered, and exclaimed,—“We bring you back the brave Marat, the tried friend of the people; they will never cease to espouse his cause.” A sapper broke off from the multitude, and exclaimed —“Marat was ever the friend of the people; had his head fallen, the head of the sapper would have fallen with it.” At these words, he brandished his axe in the air, amidst shouts of applause from the Mountain and the galleries. The mob insisted upon defiling in triumph through the hall; before the President could consult the Assembly on the subject, the unruly body rushed in, bearing down all opposition, and climbing over all the barriers, seated themselves in the vacant places of the deputies, who retired in disgust from such a scene of violence. The Convention beheld in silence the defeat of its measures; the Jacobins redoubled their efforts to improve the victory they had gained. Its approaches were incessantly besieged by an unruly mob, who clamoured for vengeance against the proscribed deputies; the galleries were filled by partisans of the Jacobins, who stifled the arguments of their opponents, and loudly applauded the most violent proposals; the clubs, at night, resounded with demands of vengeance against the traitor faction (1).

The Girondists now saw that there was no time to lose in coercing the attempts of the Jacobins, and of the Municipality. Guadet, in an energetic course, declared,—“Citizens, while good men lament in silence the misfortunes of the country, the conspirators are in motion to destroy it. Like Cæsar, they exclaim—‘Let others speak, we act.’ To meet them, we must act also. The evil lies in the impunity of the conspirators of March 10; in the prevailing anarchy; in the misrule of the authorities of Paris, who thirst only for power and gold. There is yet time to save the country, and our own tarnished honour. I propose instantly to annul the authorities of Paris; to replace the Municipality by the Presidents of the Sections; to unite the supplementary members of the Assembly at Bourges; and to announce this resolution to the departments by extraordinary couriers.” These decisive measures, if adopted by the Assembly, would have destroyed the power of the Municipality, and the designs of the conspirators; but they would have at once occasioned a civil war, and, by dividing the centre of action, augmented the danger of foreign subjugation. The majority were influenced by these considerations; the separation of the Assembly into two divisions, one at Paris, one at Bourges, seemed the immediate forerunner of conflicting governments. Barrère supported these opinions. “It is by union and firmness,” he said, “that you must dissipate the storms which assail you; division will accelerate your ruin; do you imagine, that, if the conspirators dissolve the Convention in the centre of its power, they will have any difficulty in disposing of its remnant, assembled at Bourges? I propose that we should nominate a commission of twelve persons, to watch over the designs of the Commune, to examine into the recent disorders, and arrest the persons of their authors; but never, by acceding to the measure of Guadet, declare ourselves unequal to combat its influence.” This proposal was adopted by the Convention, and the opportunity of destroying the Municipality lost for ever (2).

Energetic proposal of Guadet, 10th May.

It is not adopted, but a Commission of Twelve appointed. May 15.

(1) Toul. 280. Lac. ii. 66. Mig. i. 280. Th. iv, 151, 152.

(2) Toul. iii. 261. Mig. i. 260, 261. Th. iv. 193.

General insurrection against the Girondists and Convention, 21st May.

The Commission of Twelve, however, commenced their proceedings with vigorous measures. A conspiracy against the majority of the Convention had for some time been openly organized in Paris; the Club of the Cordeliers was the centre of the movement, and an insurrectionary committee sat night and day. The public fervour soon demanded more than the mere proscription of the thirty deputies; three hundred were required. Varlet had openly proposed a plan for the insurrection, which was discussed amidst furious cries at the Cordeliers, and the execution of the design fixed for the 22d May. It was agreed that the armed multitude should proceed to the hall of the Convention, with the Rights of Man veiled by crape, to seize and expel all the members who had belonged to the Constituent, or Legislative Assemblies, turn out the ministry, and destroy all who bore the name of Bourbon (1).

The Committee speedily obtained evidence of this conspiracy; and arrested one of its leaders, Hébert, the author of an obscene and revolting revolutionary journal, entitled the "*Père Duchesne*," which had acquired immense circulation among the followers of the Municipality. That turbulent body instantly put itself in a state of insurrection, declared its sittings permanent, and invited the people to raise the standard of revolt. Some of the most violent Sections followed their example; those who held out for the Assembly, were besieged by clamorous bands of armed men. The Club of the 26th May. Jacobins, of the Cordeliers, of the Revolutionary Sections, sat day and night; the agitation of Paris rose to the highest pitch (2).

On the 23th May, a furious multitude assembled round the hall of the Convention, and a deputation appeared at the bar, demanding, in the most threatening terms, the suppression of the Commission of Twelve, and immediate liberation of Hébert, the imprisoned member of the Magistracy,—some even went the length of insisting that the Commission should immediately be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Isnard, President of the Assembly, a courageous and eloquent Girondist, replied,—“Listen to my words: if ever the Convention is exposed to danger; if another of those insurrections, which have recurred so frequently since the 10th March, breaks out, and the Convention is outraged by an armed faction, France will rise as one man to avenge our cause; Paris will be destroyed, and soon the stranger will inquire on which bank of the Seine Paris stood (3).”

This indignant reply produced, at the moment, a great impression; but crowds of subsequent petitioners, with Danton at their head, quickly appeared, and restored confidence to the conspirators. Upon the continued refusal of Isnard to liberate Hébert, crowds from the benches of the Mountain rose to drag him from his seat; the Girondists assembled to defend him. In the midst of the tumult, Danton, in a voice of thunder, exclaimed—“So much impudence is beyond endurance; we will resist you; let there be no longer any truce between the Mountain and the base men who wished to save the tyrant (4).”

The deputies from the Municipality retired on that occasion, without having obtained what they desired; but they were resolved instantly to proceed to insurrection. All the remainder of the 25th and the whole of the 26th, was spent in agitation, and exciting the people by the most inflammatory ha-

(1) Th. iv. 206.

(2) Lac. ii. 67, 68. Mig. i. 261, 262. Th. iv.

210, 211.

(3) Lac. ii. 68, 69. Mig. i. 262. Th. iv. 213.

(4) Mig. i. 262. Lac. ii. 69.

rangues. Such was the success of their efforts, that, by the morning of the 27th, eight-and-twenty Sections were assembled to petition for the liberation of Hébert. The commission of twelve could only rely on the support of the armed force of three Sections; but they hastened, on the first summons, to the support of the Convention, and ranged themselves, with their arms and artillery, round the hall. But an immense multitude crowded round their ranks, cries of—"Death to the Girondists!" resounded on all sides, and the hearts even of the most resolute began to quail under the fury and menacing conduct of the people (1).

The Girondists with difficulty maintained their ground against the Jacobins within the Assembly, and the furious multitude who besieged its walls, when Garat, the Minister of the Interior, entered and deprived them of their last resource, the necessity of unbending firmness. When called upon to report upon the state of Paris, he declared "that he saw no appearance of a conspiracy; that he had met with nothing but respect from the crowd which surrounded the Assembly; and that the only perfidious design which he believed existed, was to divide, by the dread of chimerical dangers, two parties, equally desirous of promoting the public welfare." In making this report, Garat had been deceived by Pache, Mayor of Paris, a hypocritical Jacobin, of the most dangerous character. France had reason then to lament the retirement of the firm and sagacious Roland from his important office (2).

Struck dumb by this extraordinary and unexpected report, which appeared accountable only on the defection of the Minister of the Interior, the Girondists, for the most part, withdrew from the Assembly, and the courageous Isnard was replaced in the president's chair, by Hérault de Séchelles. Yielding to the clamour which besieged the Legislature, he declared "the force of reason and of the people are the same thing; you demand a magistrate in detention, the representatives of the people restore him to you." The motion was then put, that the Commission of Twelve should be abolished, and Hébert set at liberty; it was carried at midnight, amidst shouts of triumph from the mob, who constituted the majority, by climbing over the rails, and voting on the benches of the Mountain with the Jacobins (3).

Ashamed of the consequences of their untimely desertion of the Convention, the Girondists, on the following day, assembled in force, and reversed the decree, extorted by force, on the preceding evening. Lanjuinais in an especial manner distinguished himself in this debate, which was tumultuous and menacing to the very last degree, "Above fifty thousand citizens," said he, "have already been imprisoned in the departments, by orders of your commissioners; more arbitrary arrests have taken place than under the old régime in a whole century; and you have excited all this tumult, because we have put into custody two or three individuals who openly proclaimed murder and pillage. Your commissaries are proconsuls, who act far from you, and without your knowledge, and your whole jealousy is centred on the Commission placed under your eyes, and subject to your immediate control. On Sunday last, it was proposed at the Jacobins to have a general massacre in Paris; to-night the same proposal is to be brought forward at the Cordeliers, and the Electoral Club of the Évêché; the proofs of the conspiracy are ready; we offer them to you, and yet you hesitate; you protect only assassins covered with

(1) Th. iv. 214, 215.

(2) Lac. ii, 69. Mig. i. 263. Th. ii. 217, 218.

(3) Lac. ii. 69. Mig. i. 263. Th. iv. 220, 221.



blood." At these words the Mountain drowned the voice of the speaker, and Legendre threatened to throw him headlong from the Tribune. But the intrepid Lanjuinais kept his ground; and the decree of the preceding day was reversed by a majority of fifty-one. The Jacobins instantly broke out into the most furious exclamation. "Yesterday," said Danton, "you did an act of justice; beware of departing from its example; if you persist in asserting the powers you have usurped; if arbitrary imprisonments continue; if the public magistrates are not restored to their functions, after having shown that we surpass our enemies in moderation and wisdom, we will show that we surpass them in audacity and revolutionary vigour."—"You have violated the 'Rights of Man,'" said Collet-d'Herbois; "tremble! we are about to follow your example; they shall not serve as a shield to tyrants. Throw a veil over the statue of Liberty, so impudently placed in the midst of your hall; we will not incur the guilt of any longer restraining the indignation of the people (1)."

Renewal of the Insurrection on May 31st. The agitation, which had begun to subside, after the victory of the preceding evening, was renewed with redoubled violence on the reversal of the decree. Robespierre, Marat, Danton, Chaumette, and Pache, immediately commenced the organization of a new revolt; the 29th was employed for arranging the forces. On the 30th, the members of the Electoral Body, the Commissioners of the Clubs, the Deputies of the Sections, declared themselves in insurrection; Henriot received the command of the armed force; and the Sans-Culottes were promised forty sous a-day while under arms. These arrangements being made, the tocsin sounded, the générale beat at day-break on the morning of the 31st, and the forces of the Faubourgs marched to the Tuileries, where the Convention was assembled (2).

On this occasion the first symptom appeared of a division between Danton and Robespierre and the more furious Jacobins: the former was desirous of procuring the abolition of the Committee of Twelve, but not of an outrage on the legislature; the latter wished to overturn the Convention by the force of the Municipality. But he was already passed in the career of revolution by more desperate insurrectionists: a general revolt had been resolved on by the Central Committee of Insurrection; a moral insurrection, as they termed it, unaccompanied by pillage or violence, but with such an appalling display of physical force as should render resistance impossible. Forty-eight Sections met, and publicly announced their determination to raise the standard of revolt; and by daybreak, on the 31st, all Paris was in arms (3).

The National Guard, and the insurgent forces, were at first timid, and uncertain whose orders to obey, and for what object they were called out. The terrible cannoners, the janizaries of the Revolution, took the lead. The cry "Vive la Montagne! Périssent les Girondins!" broke from their ranks, and revealed the secret of the day; they fixed the wavering by the assumption of the lead. It was soon discovered that the object was to present a petition, supported by an armed force, to the Assembly, demanding the proscription of the twenty-two leaders of the Gironde, the suppression of the Committee of Twelve, and the imposition of a maximum on the price of bread (4).

Vast Forces organized in the Faubourgs. In the Faubourg St.-Antoine, the old centre of insurrections, the revolt assumed a more disorderly character. Pillage, immediate rapine and disorder, could alone rouse its immense population. The Commune excited their cupidity, by proposing to march to the Palais-

(1) Th. iv. 223, 224.

(2) Mig. i. 265, Lac. ii. 70, 71. Th. iv. 225, 232.

(3) Th. iv. 236, 237.

(4) Lac. ii. 71. Mig. i. 265. Th. iv. 238, 239.

Royal, whose shopkeepers were the richest in Paris. "Arm yourselves," exclaimed the agents of the Municipality, "the Counter-Revolution is at hand; at the Palais-Royal they are this moment crying 'Vive le Roi,' and trampling under foot the national colours; all its inhabitants are accomplices in the plot; march to the Palais-Royal, and thence to the Convention." But the inhabitants of that district were prepared for their defence; the gates of the palace were shut, and artillery placed in the avenues which led to them. When the immense forest of pikes began to debouche from the side of the Faubourgs, the cannoneers stood with lighted matches to their pieces; and the wave of insurrection rolled aside to the more defenceless quarter of the Legislature (1).

The Convention had early assembled at the sound of the tocsin; the chiefs of the Girondists, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of their friends, all repaired to the post of danger. They had passed the night in the house of a common friend, assembled together armed, and resolved to sell their lives dearly; but at daybreak they left their asylum, and took their seats in the Convention as the tocsin was sounding. Garat persisted in maintaining that there was nothing to fear; that a *moral insurrection* alone was in contemplation. Pache, with hypocritical zeal, declared that he had doubled the Guards of the Convention, and forbid the cannon of alarm to be discharged. At that instant, the sound of the artillery was heard; the agitation of the Assembly immediately became extreme. "I demand," said Thuriot, "that the Commission of Twelve be instantly dissolved."—"And I," said Tallien, "that the sword of the law strike the conspirators in the bosom of the Convention." The Girondists insisted that Henriot, the commander-in-chief, should be called to the bar, for sounding the cannon of alarm without the authority of the Convention. "If a combat commences," said Vergniaud, "whatever be its result, it will ruin the Republic. Let all the members swear to die at their posts." They all took the oath; in a few hours it was forgotten. "Dissolve the Commission of Twelve," said Danton, with his tremendous voice; "the cannon has sounded. If you have any political discretion you will take advantage of the public agitation to furnish you with an excuse for retracing your steps, and regaining your lost popularity. I address myself to those deputies who have some regard to the situation in which they are placed, and not to those insane mortals who listen to nothing but their passions. Hesitate no longer, therefore, to satisfy the people."—"What people?" exclaimed Vergniaud. "That people," replied Danton, "that immense body, which is our advanced guard; which hates alike every species of tyranny, and that base moderation which would speedily bring it back. Hasten then to satisfy them; save them from the aristocrats; save them from their own anger; and if the movement should continue when this is done, Paris will soon annihilate the factions who disturb its tranquillity (2).

They surround and assail the Convention.

The Tuileries were blockaded by the multitude; their presence, and the vociferous language of the petitioners, who were successively admitted to the bar of the Assembly, encouraged the Jacobins to attempt the instant destruction of their opponents, Barrère, and the Committee of Public Safety, proposed as a compromise, that the Commission of Twelve should be dissolved; Robespierre and his associates urged the immediate arrest of the Girondists:—"Citizens," said he, "let us not lose our time

(1) Lac. ii. 72. Th. iv. 247.

(2) Mig. i. 206. Th. iv. 234, 240. 243. Lac. ii. 73.

in vain clamours, and insignificant propositions. This day is perhaps the last of the struggles of freedom against tyranny."—"Move, then," exclaimed Vergniaud.—"Yes," said he; "I move, and my motion is against you! Against you, who, after the Revolution of August 10, strove to lead to the scaffold the men who achieved it; against you, who have never ceased to urge measures fatal to the prosperity of Paris; against you, who endeavoured to save the tyrant; against you, who have conspired with Dumouriez to overthrow the Republic; against you, who have unrelentingly attacked those whose heads Dumouriez demanded; against you, whose criminal vengeance has provoked the cries of indignation, which you now reproach as a crime to those who have suffered from it.—I move the immediate accusation of those who have conspired with Dumouriez, and are specified in the petitions of the people." The Assembly, moved by the violence with which they were surrounded, deemed it the most prudent course to adopt the proposal of Barrère, and the Committee, for the Suppression of the Commission, without the violent proposals of the Jacobins; a ruinous precedent of submission to popular violence, which soon brought about their total subjugation (1).

But the Revolutionists had no intention of stopping half-way in their career of violence. On the evening of the 31st, Billaud-Varennes declared in the Club of the Jacobins. "That they had only half done their work; it must be instantly completed, before the people have time to cool in their ardour."—"Be assured," said Bourdon de l'Oise, "that all those who wish to establish a burgage aristocracy will soon begin to reflect on their proceedings. Already they ask, when urged to put themselves in insurrection, against whom are we to revolt? The aristocracy is destroyed, the clergy are destroyed. Who, then, are our oppressors?" Lest any such réaction should take place, they resolved to keep the people continually in agitation. The 1st of June was devoted to completing the preparations; in the evening, Marat himself mounted the steeple of the Hôtel-de-Ville, and sounded the tocsin. The générale beat through the night, and Paris was under arms by daybreak on the morning of the 2d (2).

On this, the last day that they were to meet in this world, the Girondists dined together to deliberate on the means of defence which yet remained in the desperate state of their fortunes. Their opinions, as usual, were much divided. Some thought that they should remain firm at their posts, and die on their curule chairs, defending to the last extremity the sacred character with which they were invested. Pétion, Buzot, and Gensonné, supported that mournful and magnanimous resolution. Barbaroux, consulting only his impetuous courage, was desirous to brave his enemies by his presence in the Convention. Others, among whom were Louvet, strenuously maintained that they should instantly abandon the Convention, where their deliberations were no longer free, and the majority were intimidated by the daggers of the Jacobins, and retire each into his own department, to return to Paris with such a force as should avenge the cause of the national representation. The deliberation was still going forward, when the clang of the tocsin and the rolling of the drums warned them that the insurrection had commenced; and they broke up without having come to any determination (3).

At eight o'clock, Henriot put himself at the head of the immense columns of armed men assembled round the Hôtel-de-Ville, presented himself before

(1) Mig. i. 268. Lac. ii. 73. Toul. iii. 413; Th. iv. 251, 252.

(2) Mig. i. 269. Th. iv. 258, 259. Toul. iii. 414

(3) Th. iv. 260.

the Council of the Municipality; and declared, in the name of the insurgent people, that they would not lay down their arms till they had obtained the arrest of the obnoxious deputies.

The forces assembled on this occasion were most formidable. One hundred and sixty pieces of cannon, with tumbrils, and waggons of balls complete, furnaces to heat them red-hot, lighted matches, and drawn swords in the hands of the gunners, resembled rather the preparations for the siege of a powerful fortress, than demonstrations against a pacific legislature. In addition to this, several battalions, who had marched that morning for la Vendée, received counter-orders, and re-entered Paris in a state of extreme irritation. They were instantly supplied with assignats, worth five francs each, and ranged themselves round Henriot, ready to execute his commands, even against the Convention. After haranguing them in the Place de Grève, he proceeded to the other insurgents, put himself at their head, and marched to the Carrousel. By ten o'clock, the whole avenues to the Tuileries were blockaded by dense columns and artillery; and eighty thousand armed men surrounded the defenceless representatives of the people (1).

Few only of the proscribed deputies were present at this meeting. The intrepid Lanjuinais was among the number; from the Tribune, he drew a Vehement  
Debate in  
the Assembly. picture, in true and frightful colours, of the state of the Assembly, deliberating for three days under the poniards of assassins, threatened without by a furious multitude, domineered within by a faction, who wielded at will its violence, descending from degradation to degradation, rewarded for its condescension with arrogance, for its submission by outrage. "As long as I am permitted to raise my voice in this place," said he, "I shall never suffer the national representation to be degraded in my person. Hitherto you have done nothing; you have only suffered; you have sanctioned every thing required of you. An insurrection assembles, and names a committee to organize a revolt, with a commander of the armed force to direct it; and you tolerate the insurrection, the committee, the commander." At these words, the cries of the Mountain drowned his voice, and the Jacobins rushed forward to drag him from the Tribune; but he held fast, and the President at length succeeded in restoring silence. "I demand," he concluded, "that all the Revolutionary authorities of Paris be instantly dissolved; that every thing done during the last three days be annulled; that all who arrogate to themselves an illegal authority be declared out of the pale of the law." He had hardly concluded, when the insurgent petitioners entered, and demanded his own arrest, and that of the other Girondists. Their language was brief and decisive. "The citizens of Paris," said they, "have been four days under arms; for four days they have demanded from their mandatories redress of their rights so scandalously violated; and for four days their mandatories have done nothing to satisfy them. The conspirators must instantly be placed under arrest: You must instantly save the people, or they will take their safety into their own hands."—"Save the people," exclaimed the Jacobins; "save your colleagues, by agreeing to their provisional arrest." Barrère and the neutral party urged the proscribed deputies to have the generosity to give in their resignations in order to tranquillize the public mind. Isnard, Lanthenas, and others, complied with the request; Lanjuinais positively refused. "Hitherto," said he, "I have shown some courage; I will

(1) Mig. i. 269. Toul. iii. 415, 424, Th. iv. 261, 262.

not fail at the last extremity : You need not expect from me either suspension or resignation." Being violently interrupted by the left, he added, When the ancients prepared a sacrifice, they crowned the victim with flowers and garlands when they conducted him to the altar; the priest sacrificed him, but added not insult or injury. But you, more cruel than they, commit outrages on the victim, who is making no efforts to avert his fate."—"I have sworn to die at my post," said Barbaroux; "I will keep my oath. Bend, if you please, before the Municipality, you who refused to arrest their wickedness; or rather imitate us, whom their fury immediately demands : Wait, and brave their fury. You may compel me to sink under their daggers : You shall not make me fall at their feet (1)."

They move out of the Hall. While the Assembly was in the utmost agitation, and swayed alternately by terror and admiration, Lacroix, an intimate friend of Danton's, entered with a haggard air, and announced that he had been stopped at the gate, and that the Convention was imprisoned within its walls. The secret of the revolt became now evident; it was not conducted by Danton and the Mountain, but by Robespierre, Marat, and the Municipality. "We must instantly avenge," said Danton, "this outrage on the national representation : Let us go forth, and awe the rebels by the majesty of the legislature." Headed by its President the Convention set out, and moved in a body, with the signs of distress, to the principal gate leading to the Place de Carrousel. They were there met by Henriot on horseback, with his sword in his hand, at the head of the most devoted battalions of the Faubourgs. "What do the people demand?" said the President, Hérault de Séchelles; "the Convention is occupied with nothing but their welfare."—"Hérault," replied Henriot, "the people are not to be deceived with fine words; they demand that four-and-twenty culpable deputies be given up."—"Demand rather that we should be given up," exclaimed those who surrounded the President. "Cannoneers! to your pieces!" replied Henriot. Two guns, charged with grape-shot, were pointed against the Assembly, which involuntarily fell back; and after in vain attempting to find the means of escape at the other gates of the garden, returned in dismay to the hall. Marat followed them, at the head of a body of brigands. "I order you in the name of the people to enter, to deliberate, and to obey (2)."

But are driven back by the armed Bands. When the members were seated, Couthon rose. "You have now had convincing evidence," said he, "that the Convention is perfectly free; the indignation of the people is only pointed against certain unworthy members : We are surrounded by their homage and affection : Let us obey alike our own conscience, and their wishes. I propose that Lanjuinais, Vergniaud, Sillery, Gensonné, Le Hardi, Guadet, Pétion, Brissot, Boileau, Birotteau, Valazé, Gomaire, Bertrand, Gardien, Kervélégan, Mollevaut, Bergoing, Barbaroux, Lebon, Buzot, Lasource, Rabaut, Salles, Chambon, Gorsas, Grangeneuve, Lesage, Vigée, Louvet, and Henri Larivière, be immediately put under arrest." With the dagger at their throats, the Convention passed the decree : A large body had the courage to protest against the violence, and refuse to vote. This suicidal measure was carried by the sole votes of the Mountain, and a few adherents : the great majority refused to have any share in it. The multitude gave tumultuous cheers, and

(1) Mig. i. 270, 271. Lac. ii. 72, 73. Toul. iii. 430, 434. Th. iv. 264, 265.

(2) Lac. ii. 76, 77. Mig. i. 268, 272. Th. iv. 268, 270.

dispersed; their victory was complete; the Municipality of Paris had overthrown the National Assembly (1).

The political career of the Girondists was terminated by this day; thenceforward they were known only as individuals, by their heroic conduct in adversity and death. Their strife with the Jacobins was a long struggle between two classes, who invariably succeed each other in the lead of revolutionary convulsions. The rash and reckless, but able and generous party, which trusted to the force of reason in popular assemblies, perished because they strove to arrest the torrent they had let loose, to avenge the massacres of September, avoid the execution of the King, resist the institution of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and the Committee of Public Safety. With the excitement of more vehement passions, with the approach of more pressing dangers, with the advent of times when moderation seemed a crime, they expired. Thereafter, when every legal form was violated, every appeal against violence stifled by the imprisonment of the Girondists, democratic despotism marched in its career without an obstacle; and the terrible Dictatorship, composed of the Committee of Public Safety and the Revolutionary Tribunal, was erected in resistless sovereignty (2).

Many escape into the Provinces. The proscribed members were at first put under arrest in their own houses. Several found the means of escape before the order for their imprisonment was issued. Barbaroux, Pétion, Lanjuinais, Henri Larivière, arrived at Caen, in Normandy, where a feeble attempt at resistance to the usurped authority of the Parisian mob was made, which speedily yielded to the efforts of the Jacobin emissaries. Louvet escaped to Bordeaux, and subsequently wandered for months among the forests and caverns of the Jura, where he employed his hours of solitude in composing the able *Memoirs of his Life*. Vergniaud, Guadet, Brissot, and the other leaders, were soon afterwards consigned to prison, from whence, after a painful interval, they were conducted to the scaffold (3).

Their Trial and Condemnation. Their trial and condemnation took place in October, before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The Convention passed a decree authorizing their trial; the indictment against them was general, but its specific charges affected only five or six of the accused. They insisted upon the right of separate defence; the Jacobins, the Committee of Public Safety, and the Convention, held this demand decisive evidence of a new conspiracy. To obviate its supposed danger, and guard against the effect of the well-known eloquence of the accused, which had already strongly moved the audience, the Revolutionary Tribunal, after the trial had proceeded some days, obtained from the Convention a decree, authorizing them to convict and pass sentence, as soon as they were convinced of the guilt of the accused, *whether they had been heard in their defence or not* (4).

The grounds of the accusation were of the most contemptible kind; Chaumette recounted all the struggles of the Municipality with the Côté Droit, without adding a single fact that could inculpate the accused; the wretch Hébert recounted the particulars of his arrest by the Commission of Twelve, and alleged that Roland had endeavoured to corrupt the public writers, by offering to buy up his obscene journal, the *Père Duchesne*; Destournel deposed that the accused had exerted themselves to crush the Municipality, declared

(1) Mig. i. 272, 273. Lac. ii. 78, 79. Th. iv.

(3) Mig. ii. 293.

272.  
(2) Th. iv. 275, 276.

(4) Toul. iv. 114. Th. iv. 389. Mig. ii. 293.  
Lac. ii. 78, 99.

against the massacres in the prisons, and laboured to institute a departmental guard. Chabot was the most virulent of the witnesses against them; he ascribed to them a Machiavelian policy throughout all the Revolution; endeavouring to convert every thing to their own profit, and even permitting the massacres of September, in order to cut off some of their enemies among the victims (1).

The prosecution lasted nine days. At the end of that time, the jury declared themselves convinced; the eloquence of Vergniaud, the vehemence of Brissot, had pleaded in vain. The Court then read to the accused the decree of the Convention, empowering them to *terminate* the proceedings, as soon as the jury had declared their minds made up; they saw upon this that their fate was determined, as they were to be condemned, without being heard in their defence. They all rose, and, by loud expressions of indignation, drowned the voice of the President, who read their sentence. Valazé stabbed himself with a poniard, and perished in presence of the Court, who immediately ordered that his dead body should be borne on a car to the place of execution, and beheaded with the other prisoners. Lasource exclaimed: "I die at a time when the people have lost their reason: You will die as soon as they recover it." The other prisoners embraced each other, and exclaimed, "Vive la République!" The audience, though chiefly composed of the assassins of September 2, were melted to tears (2).

The anxiety of his friends had provided Vergniaud with a certain and speedy poison: He refused to make use of it, in order that he might accompany his friends to the scaffold. The eloquence of Vergniaud which poured forth the night before his execution, on the expiring liberty of France, in strains of unprecedented splendour, entranced even the melancholy inmates of the prison. The illustrious prisoners were conducted, on the 31st October, to the place of execution. They marched together with a firm step, singing the Revolutionary song, which they applied by a slight change to their own situation:

Their heroic  
death.

"Allons enfans de la patrie!  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé;  
Contre nous de la tyrannie  
Le couteau sanglant est levé."

When they arrived at the place of execution they mutually embraced, exclaiming, "Vive la République!" Sillery ascended first; he bowed with a grave air to the people, and received with unshrinking firmness the fatal stroke. They all died with the resolution of Romans, protesting, with their last breath, their attachment to freedom and the Republic (3).

A young man, named Girey-Dupré, was brought to the bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal. The president asked if he had been a friend of Brissot. "I had that happiness."—"What is your opinion of him?"—"That he lived like Aristides, and died like Sidney!" was the intrepid answer. He was forthwith sent to the scaffold, where he perished with the firmness of his departed friend (4).

Rabaut-St.-Étienne, one of the most enlightened and virtuous of the proscribed deputies, had escaped soon after the 2d June from Paris. Tired of wandering through the provinces, he returned to the capital, and lived concealed

(1) Th. v. 384.  
(2) Toul. iv. 114. Lac. ii. 99. Mig. ii. 294. Th. Toul. iv. 115. Riouffe, 51, 52.  
v. 389, 390, 391.

(3) Lac. ii. 99, 100. Th. v. 392. Mig. ii. 294.

(4) Lac. ii. 100.

in the house of one of those faithful friends, of whom the Revolution produced so many examples. His wife, influenced by the most tender attachment, incessantly watched over his safety. In the street, one day, she met one of the Jacobins, who assured her of his interest in her husband, and professed his desire to give him an asylum in his own house. Rabaut being informed of the circumstance, and desirous of saving his generous host from farther danger, informed the Jacobin of his place of retreat, and assigned an hour of the night for him to come and remove him from it. The perfidious wretch came accompanied by gens-d'armes, who dragged their victim, with his friendly host and hostess, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, whence they were sent to the scaffold (1). In despair at having been the instrument, however innocent, of such treachery, his wife, in the flower of youth and beauty, put herself to death.

Trial and  
Death of  
Madame  
Roland.

Madame Roland was the next victim. This heroic woman had been early involved in the proscription of the Girondists, of whom her splendid talents had almost rendered her the head. Confined in the prison of the Abbaye, she employed the tedious months of captivity in composing the Memoirs, which so well illustrate her eventful life. With a firm hand she traced, in that gloomy abode, the joyous as well as the melancholy periods of her existence; the brilliant dreams and ardent patriotism of her youth; the stormy and eventful scenes of her maturer years; the horrors and anguish of her latest days. While suffering under the fanaticism of the people, when about to die under the violence of the mob, she never abandoned the principles of her youth, or regretted her martyrdom in the cause of freedom. If the thoughts of her daughter and her husband sometimes melted her to tears, she regained her firmness on every important occasion. Her Memoirs evince unbroken serenity of mind, though she was frequently interrupted in their composition by the cries of those whom the executioners were dragging from the adjoining cells to the scaffold (2).

Her generous conduct.

On the day of her trial she was dressed with scrupulous care in white. Her fine black hair fell in profuse curls to her waist; but the display of its beauty was owing to her jailors, who had deprived her of all means of dressing it. She chose that dress as emblematic of the purity of her mind. Her advocate, M. Chaveau-Lagarde, visited her to receive her last instructions; drawing a ring from her finger, she said,—“To-morrow I shall be no more; I know well the fate which awaits me; your kind assistance could be of no avail; it would endanger you without saving me. Do not, therefore, I pray you, come to the Tribunal, but accept this as the last testimony of my regard.” Her defence, composed by herself the night before the trial, is one of the most eloquent and touching monuments of the Revolution. Her answers to the interrogatories of the judges, the dignity of her manner, the beauty of her figure, melted even the Revolutionary audience with pity. Finding they could implicate her in no other way, the president asked her if she was acquainted with the place of her husband's retreat. She replied, that “whether she knew it or not she would not reveal it, and that there was no law by which she was obliged, in a court of justice, to violate the strongest feelings of nature.” Upon this she was immediately condemned. When the reading of her sentence was concluded, she rose and said, “You judge me worthy to share the fate of the great men whom you have assassinated. I shall en-

(1) Lac. ii. 100.

(2) Riouffe. 56, 57. Lac. ii. 100. Roland *i. passim*, and 97.



deavour to imitate their firmness on the scaffold." She regained her prison with an elastic step and beaming eye. Her whole soul appeared absorbed in the heroic feelings with which she was animated (1).

She was conveyed to the scaffold in the same car with a man whose firmness was not equal to her own. While passing along the streets, her whole anxiety appeared to be to support his courage. She did this with so much simplicity and effect, that she frequently brought a smile on the lips which were about to perish. At the place of execution she bowed before the gigantic statue of Liberty, and pronounced the memorable words, "Oh, Liberty! how many crimes are committed in your name!" When they arrived at the foot of the scaffold, she had the generosity to renounce, in favour of her companion, the privilege of being first executed. "Ascend first," said she, "let me at least spare you the pain of seeing my blood flow." Turning to the executioner, she asked if he would consent to that arrangement; he replied, "That his orders were that she should die the first."—"You cannot," said she, with a smile, "I am sure, refuse a woman her last request?" Undismayed by the spectacle which immediately ensued, she calmly bent her head under the guillotine, and perished with the serenity she had evinced ever since her imprisonment (2).

Madame Roland had predicted that her husband would not long survive her. Her prophecy was speedily fulfilled. A few days afterwards, he was found dead on the road between Paris and Rouen; he had stabbed himself in that situation, that he might not, by the situation in which his body was found, betray the generous friends who had sheltered him in his misfortunes. In his pocket was contained a letter, in these terms:—"Whoever you are, oh! passenger, who discover my body, respect the remains of the unfortunate. They are those of a man who consecrated his whole life to be useful to his country; who died as he had lived, virtuous and unsullied. May my fellow-citizens embrace more humane sentiments; not fear, but indignation, made me quit my retreat when I heard of the murder of my wife. I loathed a world stained with so many crimes (3)."

The other chiefs of the party, dispersed in the provinces of France, underwent innumerable dangers, and made escapes more wonderful even than those which romance has figured. Louvet owed his salvation to the fidelity of female attachment. Barbaroux, Buzot, Pétion, and Valazé, were concealed at St.-Émilien, in a cavern, by a sister of Guadet. A few only escaped the anxious search of the Jacobins (4); their Memoirs evince a curious proof of the indignation of enthusiastic but virtuous minds at the triumph of guilty ambition.

Thus perished the party of the Gironde, reckless in its measures, culpable for its rashness, but illustrious from its talents, glorious in its fall. It embraced all the men who were philanthropists from feeling, or republicans from principle; the brave, the humane, the benevolent. But with them were also combined within its ranks numbers of a baser kind; many who employed their genius for the advancement of their ambition, and were careless of their country, provided they elevated their party. It was overthrown by a faction of coarser materials, but more determined character, with less remains of conscientious feeling, but more acquaintance

Reflections  
on the over-  
throw of the  
Girondists.

(1) Roland, i. 40, 41, 43. ii. 439. App. Q, p. 425. Riouffe, 57.

(2) Roland, i. 43. 44. Lac. x. 278.

(3) Roland, i. 45, 46. Lac. x. 278.

(4) Mémoires de Buzot, Louvet, and Barbaroux, *passim*, and Lac. x. 280.

with practical wickedness. Adorned by the most splendid talents, supported by the most powerful eloquence, actuated at times by the most generous intentions, it perished the victim of a base and despicable faction; of men sprung from the dregs of the populace, and impelled by guilty and selfish ambition. Such ever has, and ever will be, the result of revolutionary convulsions in society, when not steadily opposed in the outset by a firm union of the higher classes of the community; in the collision of opposite factions, the virtuous and the moderate will too often be overcome by the reckless and the daring. Prudence clogs their enterprise; virtue checks their ambition; humanity paralyzes their exertions. They fall, because they recoil from the violence which becomes in disastrous times essential to command success in revolutions.

The principles of this celebrated party disqualified them from taking an energetic or successful part in public affairs. Their aversion to violence, their horror at blood, rendered them totally unfit to struggle with their sanguinary antagonists. They deemed it better to suffer than to commit violence; to die in the attempt to preserve freedom rather than live by the atrocities which would subvert it. Their principles in the end, when driven to extremities, were those, so finely expressed by Louis XVIII, when urged to assassinate Napoleon, "In our family we are murdered, but we never commit murder (1)."

Their greatest fault, and it is one which all their subsequent misfortunes could not expiate, consisted in the agitation which they so sedulously maintained in the public mind. The storm which their eloquence created, it was beyond the power of their wisdom to allay. They roused the people against the throne on the 10th August; they failed in saving the monarch on the 21st January, and died under the axe of the populace whose furious passions they had awakened. Such is the natural progress of Revolution. Its early leaders become themselves the objects of jealousy when their rule is established; the turbulent and the ambitious combine against an authority which they are desirous of supplanting; stronger flattery to popular licentiousness, more extravagant protestations of public zeal, speedily rouse the multitude against those who have obtained the influence which they desire for themselves. Power falls into the hands of the most desperate; they gain every thing, because they scruple at nothing.

The Girondists, and the whole constitutional party of France, experienced, when they attempted to coerce their former allies, and restrain the march of the Revolution, the necessary effect of the false principles on which they had acted, and the perilous nature of the doctrines which they had taken such pains to spread through the people. They were never able thereafter to command the assistance of either of the great parties in the state, of the holders of property, or the advocates for spoliation. The former could place no confidence in them after having confiscated the church property, persecuted the priests, carried the cruel decree against the emigrants, provoked the revolt of the 10th August, and voted for the death of the King; the latter felt against them all the bitterness of personal deceit and party treachery, when they strove to wield the power of the executive against the men with whom they had formerly acted, and the principles by which they had excited so mighty a convulsion. It is this feeling of distrust on the one hand, and treachery on

(1) *Mémoires sur Louis XVIII*, i, 221. Buzot, 10.

the other, which so speedily annihilates the power of the authors of a revolution, when they endeavour to restrain its excesses; and renders the leader of a mighty host in one year utterly powerless and contemptible in the next. It is the charge of inconsistency which they never can get over; the bitterness excited by an abandonment of principle, which paralyzes all their efforts even to correct its abuses. The Girondists and Constitutionals experienced this cruel reverse in the most signal manner in all the latter stages of the Revolution. La Fayette wielded the whole power of France when he arrayed the National Guard against the Monarchy in 1789; but he could not raise thirty men to join his standard in defence of the throne in 1792; and the leader of the populace on the 5th October, owed his escape from their ferocity solely to his confinement in an Austrian dungeon: Vergniaud and the Girondists were all-powerful while they were declaiming against the supposed treachery of the court, and inflaming the nation to plunge into an European war; but when they inveighed against the massacres in the prisons, and sought indirectly to save the life of the monarch whom they had dethroned, they became to the last degree unpopular, and were consigned to prison and the scaffold amidst the applause of the very multitude which had so recently followed them with acclamations.

These facts suggest an important conclusion in political science, which is, that the injustice and violence of a revolutionary party can hardly ever be effectually controlled by those who have participated in its principles; but that the only hope of the friends of order in such circumstances, is to be found in those who, under every intimidation, have resolutely resisted measures of injustice. There is something in courage and consistency which commands respect, even amidst the bitterness of faction; and if a reaction against the reign of violence is ever to arise, its leaders must be found, not among those who have abandoned, but who have ever resisted the march of revolution. It costs little to a soldier to fight under the banners of an able and resolute adversary; but he will never place confidence in a general who has abandoned his colours during the combat. The Republican writers are all in error when they assert that the horrors of the Revolution were owing to the King not having cordially thrown himself into the arms of the Constitutional party. With such allies he never could have mastered the Jacobin party, supported as they were by so large a proportion of the urban population of France: it was the Royalists alone who could have effectually taken advantage of the strong reaction against the Revolution, which the first open acts of violence against the throne occasioned. And the event has abundantly proved the justice of these principles. The Orléans and Girondist parties were never able to oppose any serious resistance to the progress of the Revolution, and history can hardly find a skirmish to record, fought in defence of their principles (1); whereas the peasants of la Vendée, without any external aid, and under every disadvantage, waged a desperate war with the Republic, and after six hundred battles had been fought, and a million of men slaughtered, were still on the accession of Napoléon unsubdued. It was the general desertion of the country by the emigrants, the treachery of the army, and the irresolution of the King, which really paved the way for the Jacobin excesses.

(1) The resistance at Lyon and Toulon, though begun under Girondist colours, before the fighting began, was in reality conducted by the Royalist party.

But although the previous excesses and reckless ambition of the Girondists precluded them from opposing any effectual resistance to the progress of Revolution, they did much to redeem their ruinous errors, by the serenity of their death. Posterity invariably declares for the cause of virtue; the last impressions are those which are the most durable; the principles, which in the end prove triumphant, are those which find a responsive echo in the human heart. Already this effect has become conspicuous. The talents, the vigour, the energy of the Jacobins, are forgotten in the blood which stained their triumphs; the imprudent zeal, the irresolute conduct, the inexperienced credulity of the Girondists, are lost in the Roman heroism of their fall. The reign of Terror, the night of the Revolution, was of short duration; the stars which were extinguished in its firmament, only turned the eyes of the world with more anxiety to the coming dawn. But the eloquence of Vergniaud, the heroism of Madame Roland, have created a lasting impression upon the world; and while history, which records the dreadful evils which their impetuous declamations produced upon their country, cannot absolve them from the imputation of rash and perilous innovation, of reckless and inconsiderate ambition, it must respect some of the motives which led even to errors, whose consequences were then in a great degree unknown, and venerate the courage with which, in the last extremity, they met their fate.

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## CHAPTER X.

REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE FALL OF THE GIRONDISTS TO THE DEATH OF DANTON.

## ARGUMENT.

Formation of a new Government by the Jacobins—Vast Powers conferred upon the Committee of Public Safety—State of the Provinces—Of Lyon, Bordeaux, and Marseille—General Coalition of Departments against the Convention—Measures to meet it : it is Dissolved—Immense Power of the Committee—Law of suspected Persons—Formation of Revolutionary Committees over all France—Their immense Numbers and Expense—New Era Established, and Sunday abolished—Charlotte Corday—Her character—She resolves to assassinate Marat—Kills him—Her trial and Death—Apotheosis of Marat—Arrest of seventy-three Members of the Convention—Situation of Marie-Antoinette—Cruel Treatment and Death of the Dauphin—Trial of the Queen—Her Heroic Conduct and Execution—And Character—Violation of the Tombs of St.-Denis—Destruction of Monuments over all France—Abjuration of Christianity by the Municipality—The Goddess of Reason introduced into the Convention—Notre-Dame named the Temple of Reason—Universal abandonment of Religion, and closing of the Churches—General and excessive Dissolution of Manners—Confiscation of the Property of Hospitals and the Poor—Arrest and Death of Bailly, of Barnave, Condorcet, and Cusine—Trial and Execution of the Duke of Orléans—Estrangement of the Dantonists, and ruling Power of the Municipality—Publication of the *Old Cordelier*—Efforts of Danton to detach Robespierre from the Municipality—Secret Agreement between Robespierre and the Municipality, by which Danton is abandoned to the latter, and Hébert, Chaumette, and others, to the former—Announcement of the Projects in the Convention—Proscription of the Anarchists—Their disgraceful Death—Rupture of Danton and Robespierre—Arrest of the former with Camille-Desmoulins—Violent agitation in the Assembly—Their Trial and Execution—Resistless Power of Robespierre—General Reflections on the successive Destruction of the Revolutionists.

“THE rule of a mob,” says Aristotle, “is the worst of tyrannies (1);” and so experience has proved it, from the caprice of the Athenian democracy, to the proscriptions of the French Revolution. The reason is permanent, and must remain unaltered while society holds together. In contests for power, a monarch has, in general, to dread only the efforts of a rival for the throne; an aristocracy, the ascendancy of a faction in the nobility; the populace, the vengeance of all the superior classes in the state. Hence, the safety of the first is usually secured by the destruction of a single rival, and his immediate adherents; the jealousy of the second extinguished by the proscription or exile of a limited number of families; but the terrors of the last require the destruction of whole ranks in society. Measures, dictated by the alarm for individuals, become unnecessary when they have perished; those levelled against the influence of classes, require to be pursued till the class itself is destroyed.

It was not a mere thirst for blood which made Marat and Robespierre declare and act upon the principle, that there could be no security for the Republic till two hundred and sixty thousand heads had fallen. Hardly any men are cruel for cruelty's sake; the leaders of the Jacobins were not more so, than the reckless and ambitious of any other country would be if exposed to the influence of similar passions. Ambition is the origin of desperate

(1) Τὴν τῶν τυραννίδων τελευταία ἡ δημοκρατία.—Arist. de Politica.

measures, because it renders men sensible only of the dictates of an insatiable passion; terror is the real source of cruelty. Men esteem the lives of others lightly when their own are at stake. The revolutionary innovations being directed against the whole aristocratic and influential classes, their vengeance was felt to be implacable, and no security could be expected to the democratical leaders, till their whole opponents were destroyed.

In the strife of contending classes, the sphere of individual vengeance is fearfully augmented. Not one, but fifty leaders have terrors to allay, rivals to extinguish, hatred to gratify; with the multitude of aspirants to power, increase the number of sacrifices that are required. Amidst the contests for influence, and the dread of revenge, every man abandons his individual to his political connexions; private friendship, public character, yield to the force of personal apprehension. A forced coalition, between the most dissimilar characters, takes place from the pressure of similar danger; friends give up friends to the vengeance of political adversaries; individual security, private revenge, are purchased by the sacrifice of ancient attachment.

France experienced the truth of these principles with unmitigated severity, during the later stages of the Revolution. But it was not immediately that the leaders of the victorious faction ventured upon the practical application of their principles. The administration had been in the hands of the Girondists; some central power was indispensably required, on their overthrow, to put a period to the anarchy which threatened the country. The Committee of Public Safety presented the skeleton of a government already formed. Created some months before, it was at first composed of the neutral party; the victorious Jacobins, after the 31st May, placed themselves in possession of its power. Robespierre, St.-Just, Couthon, Billaud-Varennés, and Collot-d'Herbois, were elected members, and speedily ejected Héroult de Séchelles, and the other partisans of Danton. To the ruling Jacobins, the different departments of government were assigned; St.-Just was intrusted with the duty of denouncing its enemies; Couthon, with bringing forward its general measures; Billaud-Varennés, and Collot-d'Herbois, with the management of the departments; Carnot was made minister of war; Barrère, the panegyrist and orator of the government; Robespierre, general dictator over all (1).

The most extravagant joy prevailed among the Jacobins at their decisive triumph. "The people," said Robespierre, "have by their conduct confounded all their opponents. Eighty thousand men have been under arms nearly a week, and not one shop has been pillaged, not one drop of blood shed; and they have proved by that, whether the accusation was well founded, that they wished to profit by the disorders to commit murder and pillage. Their insurrection was spontaneous; the result of a universal moral conviction; and the Mountain, itself feeble and irresolute, showed that it had no hand in producing it. The insurrection was a great moral and popular effort, worthy of the enlightened people among whom it arose." Under such plausible colours did the revolutionists veil a movement, which destroyed the only virtuous part of the democracy, and delivered over France in fetters to the Reign of Terror (2).

The aspect of the Convention, after this great event, was entirely changed from what it had ever been before. Terror had mastered their resistance;

(1) *Mig. ii.* 295, 296. *Toul. iv.* 98. *Th. v.* 94, (2) *Th. v.* 3.

proscription had thinned their ranks. The hall was generally silent. The right, and the majority of the centre, never voted, but seemed, by their withdrawal from any active part, to condemn the whole proceedings of the Jacobins, and await intelligence from the provinces as the signal for action. All the decrees proposed by the ruling party, were adopted in silence, without any discussion (1).

Vast powers  
conferred  
upon the  
Committee  
of Public  
Safety.

By a decree of the Assembly, the whole power of government was vested in the hands of the Decemvirs, till the conclusion of a general peace. They made no concealment of the despotic nature of the authority with which they were thus invested. "You have nothing now to dread," said St.-Just, "from the enemies of freedom; all we have to do is to make its friends triumphant, and that must be done at all hazards. In the critical situation of the Republic, it is in vain to re-establish the Constitution; it would offer impunity to every attack on liberty, by wanting the force to repress them. You are too far removed from conspiracies to have the means of checking them; the sword of the law must be intrusted to surer hands; it must turn everywhere, and fall with the rapidity of lightning on all its enemies (2)." In silent dread the Assembly and the people heard the terrible declaration; its justice was universally felt; the insupportable evils of anarchy could only be arrested by the sanguinary arm of despotism.

While the practicable administration of affairs was thus lodged with despotic power in the hands of the Committee of Public Safety, the general superintendence of the police was vested in another Committee, styled of General Safety, subordinate to the former, but still possessed of a most formidable authority. Inferior to both in power, and now deprived of much of its political importance by the vast influence of the Committee of Public Safety, the Municipality of Paris began to turn its attention to the internal regulation of the city, and there exercised its power with the most despotic rigour. It took under its cognizance the police of the metropolis, the public subsistence, the markets, the public worship, the theatre, the courtezans, and framed on all these subjects a variety of minute and vexatious regulations, which were speedily adopted over all France. Chaumette, its public accuser, ever sure of the applause of the multitude, exerted in all these particulars the most rigorous authority. Consumed by an incessant desire to subject every thing to new regulations, continually actuated by the wish to invade domestic liberty, this legislator of the market-places and warehouses, became daily more vexatious and formidable; while Paché, indolent and imperturbable, agreed to every thing which was proposed, and left to Chaumette all the influence of popularity with the rabble (3).

State of the  
Provinces.

The correspondence which the Jacobins carried on over all France, with the most ardent and factious in the towns and villages, speedily gave them the entire command of the country. The democratic party, in possession of all the Municipalities in the departments, in consequence of their being elected by universal suffrage, armed with the powers of a terrible police, intrusted with the right of making domiciliary visits, of disarming or imprisoning the suspected persons, soon obtained an irresistible authority. In vain the armed sections and battalions of the National Guard strove to resist; want of union and organization paralyzed all their efforts. In almost all the towns of France they had courage enough to take up arms, and every-

(1) Th. v. 7.

(2) Mig. ii. 296. Toul. iv. 298.

(3) Th. v. 94, 96.

where endeavoured to withstand the dreadful tyranny of the magistracies; but these bodies, based on the support and election of the multitude, generally prevailed over the whole class of proprietors, and all the peaceable citizens, who in vain invoked the liberty, tranquillity, and security to property, for the preservation of which they were enrolled. This was, generally speaking, the situation of parties over all France, though the strife was more ardent in those situations where the masses were densest, and danger most evidently threatened the revolutionary party (1).

The spirit of faction was, in an especial manner, conspicuous at Lyon. A club of Jacobins was there formed, composed of deputies from all the clubs of note in the south of France, at the head of which was an ardent republican, of Italian origin, named Châllier, who was at the same time an officer of the Municipality, and President of the Civil Tribunal. The Jacobins had got possession of all the offices in the Municipality, except the Mayoralty, which was still in the hands of a Girondist, of the name of Nevière. The Jacobin Club made use of the utmost efforts to displace him, loudly demanded a Revolutionary Tribunal, and paraded through the streets a guillotine recently sent down from Paris "to strike terror into the traitors and aristocrats." On the other hand; the armed Sections, who were strongly attached to the principles of the Girondists, vigorously exerted themselves to resist the establishment of a tribunal which was shedding such torrents of blood in the capital. Every thing already announced that desperate strife, of which this devoted city so soon became the theatre (2).

The universal election of ardent and unprincipled democrats to the whole situations in the magistracy, in all the towns of France, under the general suffrage of the inhabitants, in opposition to all the efforts of a powerful, opulent, and, as the event proved, brave and devoted body of citizens in them all, is an instructive fact in political science. It proves how unfit such numerous bodies of men are to be intrusted with the choice of their own rulers in those periods when firmness in the depositaries of power is most required; and how completely under the influence of a highly popular right of suffrage the weight of property is set at nought, even in those commercial cities where it might, *a priori*, have been deemed most considerable. The addition which the revolutionary party received to their power throughout the whole convulsion, from the firm hold which this popular election gave them of the Municipalities over all France, and the irresistible influence which they everywhere possessed, was one of the principal causes of its rapid and deplorable progress. And it is not the least remarkable circumstance, that this universal and cordial support was given by the vast majority in the commercial towns of France, in opposition to their direct and immediate interests; the looms employed in Lyon and St.-Étienne having declined from 14,000 to 6000, between 1789 and 1792, under the influence of revolutionary agitation, while, with the failure of their means of subsistence, the democratic fervour of the deluded multitude appeared to be constantly increasing (3).

In the other towns in the south of France, the Girondists were all-powerful, and the utmost horror at the anarchical party, who had obtained the ascendancy at Paris, and, in the northern provinces, was already conspicuous. From the mouth of the Rhone to that of the Garonne, these sentiments were

(1) Th. iv. 157, 158.

(2) Th. iv. 161.

(3) Burke, vii. 54, 55.



nearly universal, and in some even the municipalities were in the hands of the moderate party. At Bordeaux, this feeling was so strong, that it already bordered on the feelings of Royalty; while the whole country from the Gironde and the entrance of the Loire, by the shores of the ocean to the mouth of the Seine, was openly attached to the ancient institutions of the country, and beheld with undisguised horror the atrocities with which the revolutionary party had already stained their career (1).

General co-  
alition of  
the Depart-  
ments  
against the  
Convention.  
Such was the state of public feeling in France when the Revolution of 31st May, and the fall of the Girondists, took place. That catastrophe put the whole of the southern departments into a flame; the imprisonment of the deputies of the National Representatives by the mob of Paris, the open assumption of government by the Municipality of that city, excited the most profound indignation. In most of the cities the magistracy had fallen, as already observed, into the hands of the Jacobins, who were supported by the Parent Club at Paris, and the Executive; while the armed Sections were attached to the opposite system. The catastrophe of the Girondists at Paris brought those conflicting powers almost everywhere into collision. At Marseille, the Sections rose against the Municipality, and violently seized possession of the Magistracy; at Lyon, a furious combat took place; the Sections took the Hôtel-de-Ville by assault, dispossessed the Magistracy, shut up the Jacobin Club, and gained the command of the city. At Bordeaux, the arrest of the Girondists, of whose talents they were justly proud, excited the most violent sensation, which was brought to a crisis by the arrival of the fugitive deputies, who announced that their illustrious brethren were in fetters, and in hourly expectation of death (2).

On the 18th June the department of Eure gave the signal of insurrection; it was agreed that four thousand men should march upon Paris to liberate the Convention. Great part of Normandy followed the example, and all the departments of Brittany were in arms. The whole valley of the Loire, with the exception of that which was the theatre of the war of la Vendée, proposed to send deputies to Bourges to depose the usurped authority at Paris. At Bordeaux, the sensation was extreme. All the constituted authorities assembled together; erected themselves into a commission styled of Public Safety; declared that the Convention was no longer free; appointed an armed force, and despatched couriers into all the neighbouring departments. Marseille sent forth a thundering petition; the whole mountaineers of the Jura were in a ferment; and the departments of the Rhone, the Garonne, and the Pyrenees, joined themselves to the vast confederacy. So far did the spirit of revolt proceed, that at Lyon a prosecution was instituted against Challier and the leaders of the Jacobin Club; and deputies, to concert measures for their common safety, were received from Marseille, Bordeaux, and Caen. Seventy departments were in a state of insurrection; and fifteen only remained, wholly devoted to the faction who had mastered the convention (3).

Measures to  
meet it.  
Opinions were divided at Paris how to meet so formidable a danger. Barrère, proposed in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, that the revolutionary committees, which had become so formidable throughout France, from their numerous arrests, should be everywhere annulled; that the primary assemblies should be assembled at Paris to name a commander of the armed force, in lieu of Henriot, who had been appointed

(1) Th. iv. 160, 163.

(2) Th. v. 8, 10, 11.

(3) Th. v. 13, 14.

by the insurgents; and that thirty deputies should be sent as hostages to the provinces. But the Jacobins were not disposed to any measures of conciliation. Robespierre adjourned the consideration of the report of the committee; and Danton, raising the voice so well known in all the perils of the Revolution exclaimed, "The Revolution has passed through many crises, and it will survive this as it has done the others. It is in the moments of a great production that political, like physical bodies, seem menaced by an approaching destruction. The thunder rolls, but it is in the midst of its roar that the great work which is to consummate the happiness of twenty-five millions of men, will be produced." In this spirit the Convention, instead of yielding, adopted the most vigorous measures, and spoke in the most menacing strain. They declared that Paris, in placing itself in a state of insurrection, had deserved well of the country; that the arrested deputies should forthwith be lodged in prison like ordinary criminals; that a call of the Convention should be made, and all those absent without excuse instantly be expelled, and their place supplied by new representatives; that all attempts at correspondence or coalition among the departmental authorities were illegal, and that those who persisted in them should forthwith be sent to Paris; they annulled the resolution of the department of the Eure; ordered all the refractory authorities to be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and sent the most ardent Jacobins into the provinces to enforce submission to the central government (1).

It is dissolved.

These vigorous measures effectually broke this formidable league. The departments, little accustomed to resist the authority of the government at Paris, returned one by one to submission. Hostile preparations were made at Bordeaux, Lyon, Rouen, and Marseille; but the insurgents, without a leader or central point of union, and destitute of all support from the nobility and natural chiefs of the country, were unable to struggle with the energetic Committee of Public Safety, wielding at will the army, the Jacobin Clubs, and the Municipalities. They continued their preparations, however, and refused to send the proscribed authorities to Paris; but their ardour gradually cooled, and in two months the seeds of revolt existed only in vigour at Lyon, Toulon, and Marseille, where it afterwards brought about a bloody catastrophe (2).

The Convention, shortly after, now wholly under the power of the Jacobins, proceeded to the formation of a constitution, the most democratic that ever existed upon earth. Eight days completed the work. Every Frenchman of twenty-one years of age was entitled to exercise the rights of a citizen; a deputy was named by every fifty thousand citizens. On the 1st of May of every year, the primary assemblies were to meet, without any convocation, to renew the deputies. It was adopted without discussion, and instantly circulated over all France. "The most democratic constitution that ever existed," said Robespierre, "has issued from the bosom of an Assembly composed of counter-revolutionists, now purged of its unworthy members (3)."

But there never was a greater mistake than to imagine, that this constitution, so Republican in form, conferred any real liberties on the people. Its only effect was to concentrate the whole authority of the state in the hands of a few popular leaders.

(1) Th. v. 16, 18.

(2) Th. v. 20, 27, 61, 75.

(3) Th. v. 59, 60.

Vast Powers of the Committee of Public Safety. Thenceforward, the Committee of Public Safety at Paris exercised, without opposition, all the powers of government; it named and dismissed the generals, the judges, and the juries; appointed the intendants of the provinces; brought forward all public measures in the Convention, and launched its thunder against every opposite faction. By means of its Commissioners it ruled the provinces, generals, and armies, with absolute sway; and soon after, the law of suspected persons placed the personal freedom of every subject at its disposal; the Revolutionary Tribunal rendered it the master of every life; the requisitions and the maximum, of every fortune: the accusations in the Convention, of every member of the legislature (1).

Law of Suspected Persons. The law of suspected persons, which gave this tremendous power to the Decemvirs, passed on the 17th September. It declared all persons liable to arrest, who, "either by their conduct, their relations, their conversation, or their writing, have shown themselves the partisans of tyranny or of federation, or the enemies of freedom; all persons who have not discharged their debts to the country; all nobles, the husbands, wives, parents, children, brothers, sisters, or agents of emigrants, who have not incessantly manifested their devotion to the Revolution (2)." Under this law, no person had any chance of safety, but in going the utmost length of revolutionary fury (3).

Formation of Revolutionary Committees over all France. The revolutionary committees were declared the judges of the persons liable to arrest. Their number augmented with frightful rapidity; Paris had soon forty-eight. Every village throughout the country followed its example. Five hundred thousand persons, drawn from the dregs of society, disposed in these committees of the lives and liberties of every man in France. With generous resolution, some men entered them with the design of arresting their oppression; they were soon expelled to make way for more obedient ministers of the will of the dictators (4).

Their immense numbers and expense. The number of revolutionary committees which sprung up in every part of the kingdom to carry into execution this terrible law, was almost incredible. Fifty thousand were soon in operation, from

(1) Mig. ii. 296, 297. Th. v. 93, 94, 95. Lac. ii. 92.

(2) Lac. ii. 92.

(3) This atrocious law, as explained by a decree of the Municipality of Paris, which was circulated over all France, gave the following definition of suspected persons. 1. All those who, in the assemblies of the people, arrest their enthusiasm by cries, menaces, or crafty discourses. 2. All those who more prudently speak only of the misfortunes of the Republic, and are always ready to spread bad news with an affected air of sorrow. 3. All those who have changed their conduct and language according to the course of events, who were mute on the crimes of the Royalists and Federalists, and loudly exclaim against the slight faults of the Republicans. 4. All those who bewail the situation of the farmers or avaricious merchants who have had their property taken from them by the forced requisitions. 5. Those who with the words Liberty, Country, and Republic, in their mouths, frequent the society of priests, gentlemen, Feuillants, Moderates, or Aristocrats, or take an interest in their sufferings. 6. Those who have not taken an active part in supporting the cause of the people, and excuse them-

selves for their lukewarmness, by alleging their patriotic gifts or services in the National Guard. 7. Those who testified indifference on the proclamation of the Republican constitution, or have expressed vain fears as to its durability. 8. All those who, if they have done nothing against liberty, have done nothing for it. 9. All who do not attend regularly the meetings of their sections, and allege, as an excuse, that they do not like to speak in public, or that their time is occupied by their private affairs. 10. Those who speak with contempt of the constituted authorities, the ensigns of the law, the popular societies, or the defenders of liberty. 11. Those who have signed any anti-revolutionary petitions, or frequented societies or clubs of the higher classes. 12. All who were partisans of La Fayette, or served under him in the execution of the Champ-de-Mars.—Under these ample clauses, every one was embraced who was obnoxious to the Revolutionists; and the number of prisoners in Paris alone, was raised in a few days from three hundred to three thousand, embracing all that remained of the elegance of the Faubourg St. Germain. [Th. v. 360, 361.]

(4) Lac. ii. 93.

Calais to Bayonne. According to the calculations of the Conventionnel Cambon, they cost annually to the nation 591,000,000 of assignats, or above L.24,000,000 sterling. Every member of these committees received three francs a-day, and their number was no less than 540,000. In the immense number of the most active and ambitious of the people who were enlisted on the side of the revolutionary government, and personally interested in its preservation, is to be found the real secret of the firm establishment and long continuance of the Reign of Terror (1).

The calculations of these inferior agents of cruelty soon outstripped those of their masters. Marat had asserted that 260,000 heads must fall before freedom was secure. The revolutionary committees discovered that 700,000 persons must be sacrificed. The prisons were speedily loaded with victims in every town in France; a more speedy mode of disposing of them was proposed than the massacre of 2d September. "Let them quake in their cells," said Collot-d'Herbois in the Convention; "let the base traitors tremble at the successes of our enemies: let a mine be dug under the prisons, and at the approach of those whom they call their liberators, let a spark blow them into the air." The retreat of the Allied Armies rendered unnecessary the inhuman proposal at that moment; and famine, pestilence, and the guillotine, soon made its renewal superfluous (2).

This terrible power was everywhere based upon the co-operation of the multitude. That formidable body generally aided in extending the Reign of Terror; in the clubs, by incessant denunciations of the opulent or respectable classes; in the committees, by multiplying the number of vindictive commitments. They supported the sword of the Decemvirs, because it fell upon the class above themselves, and opened to the indigent the wealth and the employments of the better ranks in the state: because it flattered them by the possession of power which they were wholly disqualified to exercise, and ruined the higher ranks whom they had been taught to regard as their natural enemies (3).

These revolutionary measures were executed over the whole extent of France with the last severity. Conceived by the most ardent minds, they were violent in their principles; carried into effect far from the leaders who framed them, they were rendered still more oppressive by the brutal character of the agents to whom their execution was intrusted. Part of the citizens were compelled to quit their homes; another was immured in dungeons as suspected; the barn-yards of the farmers, the warehouses of the merchants, the shops of the tradesmen, were forcibly emptied for the use of the armies or the government, and nothing but an elusory paper given in exchange. The forced loans were exacted with the utmost rigour; the commissioners said to one, "You are worth 10,000 livres a-year;" to another, "You have 20,000;" and, to save their heads from the guillotine, they were happy to surrender their property to the demands (4).

No better picture can be desired of the tyranny of these despotic commissioners, than is furnished by the report of one of their members to the Convention. "Everywhere," said Laplanche, who had been sent to the department of Cher, "I have made terror the order of the day; everywhere I have imposed heavy contributions on the rich and the aristocrats. From Orléans I have extracted fifty thousand francs; and in two days, at Bourges, I raised

(1) Chateaub. Étud. Hist. Pref. 97, 98.

(2) Lac. ii. 93, 94.

(3) Mig. ii. 297.

(4) Th. v. 353.

two millions; where I could not appear in person, my delegates have amply supplied my place. I have dismissed all the federalists, imprisoned all the suspected, put all the Sans-Culottes in authority. I have forcibly married all the priests, everywhere electrified the hearts and inflamed the courage of the people. I have passed in review numerous battalions of the National Guard, to confirm their republican spirit, and guillotined numbers of Royalists. In a word, I have completely fulfilled my imperial mandate, and acted everywhere as a warm partisan of the Mountain, and faithful representative of the Revolution (1)."

New era established. Sunday abolished. To obliterate as far as possible all former recollections, a new era was established; they changed the divisions of the year, the names of months and days. The ancient and venerable institution of Sunday was abolished; the period of rest fixed at every tenth day; time was measured by divisions of ten days; and the year was divided into twelve equal months, beginning on the 22d September. These changes were preparatory to a general abolition of the Christian religion, and substitution of the worship of Reason in its stead (2).

Meanwhile, the prisons of Paris exhibited the most extraordinary spectacle. Filled at once with ordinary malefactors, and all that yet remained of dignity, beauty, or virtue in the Republic, they presented the most unparalleled assemblage that modern Europe had yet seen of unblushing guilt and unbending virtue, of dignified manners and revolutionary vulgarity, of splendid talent and frightful atrocity. In some, where the rich were allowed to provide for their own comforts, a singular degree of affluence and even elegance for some time prevailed; in others, the most noble captives were weeping on a couch of straw, with no other covering than a few filthy rags. The French character, imbued beyond any other in Europe with elasticity, and capability to endure misfortunes, in many instances rose superior to all the horrors with which the jails were surrounded. From the multitude and lustre of their fellow-sufferers, every one felt his own calamities sensibly softened. By degrees the ordinary interests of life began to exert their influence even on the verge of the tomb; poetry enchanted the crowded cells by touching strains, eloquence exerted its fascinating ascendant, beauty renewed its silken chains. The female captives of rank became attentive to their dress, intimacies and attachments were formed, and, amidst all the agitation and agony consequent on their protracted sufferings, the excitements of a happier existence were felt even to the foot of the scaffold. By degrees, as the prosecutions became more frequent, and numbers were daily led out to execution, the sense of common danger united them in the bonds of the strongest affection; they rejoiced and wept together; and the constant thinning of their number produced a sympathy among the survivors, which outlived every other feeling of existence (3).

While these events were in progress, the arm of female enthusiasm arrested the course of one of the tyrants. Charlotte Corday, a native of St.-Saturnin, near Séez, at the age of five-and-twenty, was animated by a heroism and devotion above her sex. Gifted with a beautiful form and a serene temper, she deemed the occupations and ordinary ambition of women beneath her serious regard; possessed of more than masculine courage, she had lost nothing of female delicacy. One only passion, the love of liberty,

(1) Th. v. 354.

(2) M<sup>g</sup>. ii. 298.

(3) Th. v. 362, 363, 364. Riouffe, 46, 51, 60, 68.

concentrated the ardent aspirations of her mind. Her enthusiasm was awakened to the highest degree by the arrival of the proscribed Girondists at Caen; all the romantic visions of her youth seemed blighted by the bloody usurpations of the ruling faction at Paris. Marat, the instigator of all the atrocities, she imagined to be their leader. If he could be removed, no obstacle appeared to remain to the reign of Justice and Equality, to the commencement of the happiness of France. In the heroic spirit of female devotion, she resolved to sacrifice her life to attain this inestimable object (1).

She resolves  
to assassi-  
nate Marat.

Having taken her resolution, she regained all her wonted cheerfulness of manner, which the public calamities had much impaired. Deceived by the appearance of joy which she exhibited, her relations allowed her to set off on some trifling commissions to Paris. In the public conveyance she was chiefly distinguished by the amiable playfulness of her demeanour, uninterrupted even by the savage conversation of some Jacobins who were present. The first day of her arrival at Paris was employed in executing her commissions; on the second, she purchased a knife at the Palais-Royal, to plunge into the bosom of the tyrant. On the third day, she with difficulty obtained an entrance to Marat. She found him in the bath, where he eagerly enquired after the proscribed deputies at Caen. Being told their names, "They shall soon meet with the punishment they deserve," said Marat. "Yours is at hand!" exclaimed she, and stabbed him to the heart. He uttered a loud shriek and expired. Charlotte Corday remained motionless in the apartment, and was seized and conducted to prison (2).

Her Trial  
and Death.

On the day of her trial she interrupted the prosecutors, who were beginning to prove the death of the deceased.—"These formalities are unnecessary—I killed Marat!"—"What tempted you to commit the murder?"—"His own crimes."—"What do you mean by his crimes?"—"The misfortunes which he has inflicted on France since the Revolution, and which he was preparing to increase."—"Who are your associates?"—"I have none; I alone conceived the idea."—"What did you propose to yourself by putting Marat to death?"—"To stop the anarchy of France. I have slain one man to save an hundred thousand; a wretch, to preserve the innocent; a savage monster, to give repose to my country. I was a Republican before the Revolution, and I have never failed in energy?"—"What do you understand by energy?" asked the president. "The sentiment which animates those who, disdaining the consideration of their own safety, sacrifice themselves for the sake of their country." Upon hearing her sentence, she gave a joyful exclamation, and, with a radiant countenance, handed to the president two letters, one addressed to Barbaroux, the other to her father. In the latter, she said, "Pardon me, my dear father, for having disposed of my life without your permission. I have avenged many victims, prevented others. The people will one day acknowledge the service I have rendered my country. For your sake I wished to remain *incognito*, but it was impossible; I only trust you will not be injured by what I have done. Farewell, my beloved father; forget me, or rather rejoice at my fate; it has sprung from a noble cause. Embrace my sister for me, whom I love with all my heart, as well as all my relations. Never forget the words of Corneille—

"The crime makes the shame, and not the scaffold."

When led out to execution, she gazed with undisturbed serenity on the

(1) Lac. ii. 80. Th. v. 77. 78.

(2) Lac. ii. 80, 81. Mig. ii. 279. Th. v. 80, 81.

preparations for her death. Her appearance was that of a lovely female, bearing with meekness and inward satisfaction, a triumphal fête, of which she was the object. The immense multitude seemed to her enfranchised by the sacrifice she had made. When the axe had terminated her life, the executioner seized her head, beautiful even in death, and gave it several buffets; the indignant spectators shuddered at his atrocity (1).

Apotheosis  
of Marat.

The Jacobins attempted to deify Marat : Robespierre pronounced an eloquent eulogium on his virtues in the Convention. "If I speak to-day," said he, "it is because I am bound to do so. Poniards were here used : I should have received the fatal blow : Chance alone made it light on that great patriot. Think no longer, therefore, of vain declamations or the pomp of burial; the best way to avenge Marat is to prosecute his enemies with relentless vigour. The vengeance which is satisfied with funeral honours is soon appeased, and loses itself in useless projects. Renounce, then, these useless discussions, and avenge him in the only manner worthy of his name." His obsequies were celebrated with extraordinary pomp; a band of young women were invited to throw flowers on the body, and the President of the Popular Societies, who pronounced his funeral oration, said, "Let us not pronounce his eulogy : it is to be found in his conduct, his writings, his ghastly wound, his death. Citizens! Cast your flowers on the pale body of Marat : He was our friend—the friend of the people; it was for the people that he lived, for the people that he died. Enough has now been given to lamentation : Listen to the great soul of Marat, which rises from the grave, and says, 'Republicans put an end to your tears : Republicans should weep but for a moment, and then devote themselves to their country : It was not me whom they wished to assassinate; it was the Republic : It is not I who cry for vengeance; it is the Republic; it is the people; it is yourselves!'" His remains were consigned with funeral pomp to the Panthéon; and his monument raised in every town and village of France (2). Posterity has reversed the sentence; it has consigned Marat to eternal execration, and associated Charlotte Corday with Timoleon and Brutus.

Arrest of  
seventy-  
three Mem-  
bers of the  
Convention.

Robespierre and the Decemvirs made the assassination of Marat the ground for increased severity towards the broken remains of the Girondist party. Many of their friends remained in the Convention; with generous constancy they still sat on the benches to the right, thinned by the proscription of so many noble members. During the trial of Charlotte Corday, a secret protest, signed by seventy-three deputies, against the usurpation of 2d June, was discovered (3); they were all immediately arrested, and thrown into prison. The Convention, after their removal, contained no elements even of resistance to the tyrants.

Situation of  
Marie-An-  
toinette.

Marie-Antoinette was the next victim. Since the death of the King, his unfortunate family had been closely confined in the Temple; the Princesses had themselves discharged all the duties of menial servants to the Queen and the Dauphin. A project had been formed, with every appearance of success, for her escape : She at first listened to the proposal, but on the evening before it was to be carried into execution, declared her resolution never to separate from her son. "Whatever pleasure it would give me," said she, "to escape from this place, I cannot consent to be separated from him. I can feel no enjoyment without my children : with them I

(1) Mig. ii. 279. Th. v. 86, 78. Lac. ii. 82, 83.

(3) Lac. ii. 84. Toul. iv. 279.

(2) Mig. ii. 279. Lac. ii. 83. Th. v. 88—91.

can regret nothing." Even in the prison of the Temple, the cares of his education were sedulously attended to; and the mind of the young King already imbibed the duties of royalty (1)."

The Revolution of 31st May was felt in its full severity by the prisoners in the Temple, as well as all the other captives in France. Hébert insisted that the family of the tyrant should not be better treated than that of a family of Sans-Culottes; and he obtained a decree from the magistrates, by which every species of luxury was withdrawn. Their fare was reduced to the humblest kind; wicker lamps became their only light, and their dress the coarsest habiliments. He himself soon after visited the Temple, and took from the unhappy prisoners even the little movables on which their only comfort depended. Eighty-four louis, which the Princess Elizabeth had received from the Princess Lamballe, and which she had hitherto concealed, could not elude his rigorous search, and were taken away (2).

Soon the barbarity of the Government envied the widowed and captive Queen even the pleasure of beholding her son. The discovery of an abortive conspiracy for their liberation, was made the ground for separating the Dauphin from his mother, and delivering him to the inhuman Simon, the agent and friend of Robespierre. In vain the young Prince demanded to see the decree which authorized this cruel separation. His mother, weeping, recommended submission; and he remained two days without taking nourishment, after he was for ever withdrawn from her sight. All the cruel treatment of Simon could not extinguish the native generosity of his disposition. "Capet," said he, "if the Vendéans were to succeed in delivering you, and placing you on the throne, what would you do with me?"—"I would pardon you," replied the infant monarch (3).

Cruel treatment and death of the Dauphin.

"What am I to do with the child?" said Simon to the Committee of Public Safety:—"Banish him?"—"No."—"Kill him?"—"No."—"Poison him?"—"No."—"What then?"—"Get quit of him."

These instructions were too faithfully executed. By depriving him of air, exercise, and wholesome food, by keeping him in a continual state of squalid filth, the unfortunate child was at length brought to his grave, without imposing upon his keepers the necessity of actual violence (4).

Aug. 2.

On the 2d August, the Queen was separated from her weeping daughter, and confined alone in the prison of the Conciergerie. A narrow, gloomy, and damp apartment, a worn mattras, and a bed of straw, constituted the sole accommodations of one, for whom the splendour of Versailles once seemed hardly adequate. She was kept there above two months in the closest confinement; her mild and heroic demeanour interested even the wife of the jailor in her behalf. Madame de Staël published a pamphlet, in which, with generous eloquence, she urged the impolicy as well as injustice of farther severity against the royal family. "Women of France," she concluded, "I appeal to you: your empire is over, if ferocity continues to reign: your destinies are gone, if your tears fall in vain. Defend then the Queen, by the arms which Nature has given you: Seek the infant, who will perish if bereaved of his mother, and must become the object of painful interest, from the unheard-of calamities which have befallen him. Let him ask on his knees the life of his mother: childhood can pray; it can

(1) Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Angoulême, 17.  
Lac. x. 226. Duch. d'Angoulême, 17.

(2) Th. v. 369.

(3) Lac. x. 230, 233. Th. v. 370.

(4) Lac. x. 233.



pray, when as yet it knows not the calamity which it would avert." But her efforts were in vain. On the 14th October, the Queen was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal (1).

Trial of the Queen.  
Oct. 14. An immense crowd assembled to witness her trial. The spectacle of a QUEEN being tried by her subjects, was as yet new in the history of the world; the populace, how much soever accustomed to sanguinary scenes, were strongly excited by this event. Sorrow and confinement had whitened her once beautiful hair; her figure and air still commanded the admiration of all who beheld her; her cheeks, pale and emaciated, were occasionally tinged with a vivid colour, at the mention of those she had lost. Out of deference to her husband's memory, rather than her own inclination, she pleaded to the Court. Their interrogatories were of no avail; her answers, like those of the King, were clear, distinct, and unequivocal (2).

As the form of examining witnesses was necessary, the prosecutors called the Count d'Estaing, who commanded the military at Versailles on the 5th October, 1789; but though the Queen had been his political opponent, he had too high a sense of honour to tell anything but the truth, and spoke only of her heroism on that trying occasion, and her noble resolution expressed in his presence to die with her husband, rather than obtain life by leaving him. Manuel, notwithstanding his hostility to the Court during the Legislative Assembly, declared he could not depone to one fact against the accused. The venerable Bailly was next brought in; he now beheld the fruits of his democratic enthusiasm, and wept when he saw the Queen. When asked if he knew "the woman Capet," he turned with a melancholy air to his Sovereign, and, profoundly bowing his head, said, "Yes, I know *Madame*." He then declared that he could say nothing against her, and that all the pretended accounts extracted from the young Prince, relative to the journey to Varennes, were false. The Jacobins were furious at his testimony, and, from the violence of their language, he easily anticipated the fate which they reserved for himself. Recourse was then had to the testimony of other witnesses; the monsters Hébert and Simon were examined, and deposed that the Dauphin had informed them that he had been initiated into improper practices by his mother; the Queen, overwhelmed with horror at the atrocious falsehood, remained silent. A juryman having insisted that she should answer,—"If I have not hitherto spoken," said she, "it is because nature refused to answer to such an accusation, brought against a mother." Turning to the audience, with inexpressible dignity, she added, "I appeal to all the mothers who hear me, whether such a thing is possible." It was of no avail; notwithstanding the eloquent and courageous defence of her counsel, she was condemned (3).

Her heroic conduct and execution. At four in the morning of the day of her execution, she wrote a letter to the Princess Elizabeth, worthy to be placed beside the testament of Louis. "To you, my sister," said she, "I address myself for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death; it is so only to the guilty; but to rejoin your brother. Innocent like him, I hope to emulate his firmness at the last hour. I weep only for my children: I hope that one day, when they have regained their rank, they may be reunited to you, and feel the blessing of your tender care. Let them ever recollect what I have never ceased to inculcate, that a scrupulous discharge of duty is the

(1) De Staël, *Réflexions sur le Procès de la Reine*. Œuvres, xvi, 32. Lac. x. 239, 241, 249.

(2) Lac. x. 250, 251. Th. v. 374.

(3) Lac. x. 254. Th. v. 3, 4, 375.

only foundation of a good life; friendship and mutual confidence its best consolation. May my son never forget the last words of his father, which I now repeat from myself : *Never to attempt to revenge our death.* I die true to the Catholic religion; the faith of my fathers, which I have never ceased to profess : Deprived of all spiritual consolation, I can only seek for pardon from Heaven. I ask forgiveness of all who know me; from you in an especial manner, my sister, for all the pain I may have involuntarily given you : I pray for forgiveness to all my enemies (1).”

October 16. When led out for execution, she was dressed in white : She had cut off her hair with her own hands. Placed in a hurdle, with her arms tied behind her back, she was conducted by a long circuit to the place of execution, which was on the Place of the Revolution (2), where her husband had perished. The people, roused by Revolutionary emissaries, raised savage shouts of joy as she moved along; the Queen, with a serene look, indicating pity rather than suffering, bore that last expression of popular fury. When the procession reached the fatal place, she ascended with a firm step the scaffold (3); her countenance was illuminated by an expression of Christian hope; and the daughter of the Cæsars died with a firmness that did honour to her race.

Her character. Thus perished, at the age of thirty-nine, Marie-Antoinette, Queen of France. Called in early life to the first throne in Europe, surrounded by a splendid court and a flattering nobility, blessed with an affectionate husband and promising family, she seemed to have approached, as nearly as the uncertainty of life will admit, to the limits of human felicity. She died, after years of suffering and anguish, broken by captivity, subdued by misfortune, bereft of her children, degraded from her throne, on the scaffold, where she had recently before seen her husband perish. History has not recorded a more terrible instance of reverse of fortune, or more illustrative of the wisdom of the ancient saying, “that none should be pronounced happy till the day of their death (4).”

Her character has come comparatively pure and unsullied out of the revolutionary furnace. An affectionate daughter and a faithful wife, she preserved in the two most corrupted courts of Europe the simplicity and affections of domestic life. If in early youth her indiscretion and familiarity were such as prudence would condemn, in later years her spirit and magnanimity were such as justice must admire. She was more fitted for the storms of adversity than the sunshine of prosperity. Ambitious and overbearing in the earlier years of her reign : it was the sufferings of her later days that drew forth the nobler parts of her character. The worthy descendant of Maria-Theresa, she would have died in the field combating her enemies, rather than live on the throne, subject to their control. Years of misfortune quenched her spirit, but did not lessen her courage; in the solitude of the Temple, she discharged, with exemplary fidelity, every duty to her husband and her children, and bore a reverse of fortune, unparalleled even in that age of calamity, with a heroism that never was surpassed (5).

Her marriage to Louis was considered at the time as a masterstroke in politics. A long alliance between the rival monarchies was anticipated from the propitious union, which seemed to unite their destinies. It led to a war

(1) Lac. x. 259.

(2) Now the Place Louis XV.

(3) Lac. x. 261. Toul, iv. 107. Th, v. 337.

(4) Plinarch in Solon.

(5) Toul, iv. 103, 109.

more terrible than any which had yet shaken these powers; to the repeated capture of both capitals by hostile armies; to mutual exasperation unprecedented between their people. So uncertain are the conclusions of political wisdom, when founded on personal interests or connections, and not on the great and permanent principles which govern human affairs. The manners of the Queen accelerated the Revolution: her foreign descent exasperated the public discontent; her undeserved death was one means of bringing about its punishment. Slow, but sure, came the hour of Germany's revenge. On that day twenty years from which she ascended the scaffold, commenced the fatal rout of France on the field of Leipsic (1).

Violation of the Tombs of St.-Denis. The execution of the Queen was an act of defiance by the National Convention to all the crowned heads in Europe. It was immediately followed by a measure as unnecessary as it was barbarous,—the violation of the tombs of St.-Denis, and the profanation of the sepulchres of the kings of France. By a decree of the Convention, these venerable asylums of departed greatness were ordered to be destroyed,—a measure never adopted by the English Parliament even during the frenzy of the Covenant; and which proves, that political fanaticism will push men to greater extremities than religious. A furious multitude precipitated itself out of Paris; the tombs of Henry IV, of Francis I, and of Louis XII, were ransacked, and their bones scattered in the air. Even the glorious name of Turenne could not protect his grave from spoliation. His remains were almost undecayed, as when he received the fatal wound on the banks of the Lech. The bones of Charles V, the saviour of his country, were dispersed. At his feet was found the coffin of the faithful Du Guesclin, and French hands profaned the skeleton before which English invasion had rolled back. Most of these tombs were found to be strongly secured. Much time, and no small exertion of skill and labour, was required to burst their barriers. They would have resisted for ever the decay of time, or the violence of enemies; they yielded to the fury of domestic dissension (2).

Destruction of Monuments over all France. This was immediately followed by a general attack upon the monuments and remains of antiquity throughout all France. The sepulchres of the great of past times, of the Barons and Generals of the feudal ages, of the Paladins, and of the Crusaders, were involved in one undistinguished ruin. It seemed as if the glories of antiquity were forgotten, or sought to be buried in oblivion. The tomb of Du Guesclin shared the same fate as that of Louis XIV. The skulls of monarchs and heroes were tossed about like foot-balls by the profane multitude; like the grave-diggers in Hamlet, they made a jest of the lips before which nations had trembled (3).

The monumental remains, which had escaped their sacrilegious fury, were subsequently collected by order of the directory, and placed in a great museum at Paris, where they long remained piled and heaped together in broken confusion,—an emblem of the Revolution, which destroyed in a few years what centuries of glory had erected.

Abjuration of Christianity by the Municipality. Having massacred the great of the present, and insulted the illustrious of former ages, nothing remained to the Revolutionists but to direct their vengeance against Heaven itself. Paché, Hébert, and Chaumette, the leaders of the Municipality, publicly expressed their deter-

(1) On Oct. 16, 1813. She died Oct. 16, 1793.

(3) Lac. x. 264, 265.

(2) Chateaub. Etud. Hist. iv. 169. Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 142, and Hist. x. 265.

mination "to dethrone the King of Heaven, as well as the monarchs of the earth." To accomplish this design, they prevailed on Gobel, the apostate Constitutional Bishop of Paris, to appear at the bar of the Assembly, accompanied by some of the clergy of his diocese, and there abjure the Christian faith. He declared, "that no other national religion was now required but that of liberty, equality, and morality." Many of the Constitutional Bishops and clergy in the Convention joined in the proposition. Crowds of drunken artisans and shameless prostitutes crowded to the bar, and trampled under their feet the sacred vases, consecrated for ages to the holiest purposes of religion. The sections of Paris shortly after followed the example of the Constitutional clergy, and publicly abjured the Christian religion. The churches were stripped of all their ornaments; their plate and valuable contents brought in heaps to the Municipality and the Convention, from whence they were sent to the Mint to be melted down. Trampling under foot the images of Our Saviour and the Virgin, they elevated, amidst shouts of applause, the busts of Marat and Lepelletier, and danced round them, singing parodies on the Hallelujah, and dancing the Carmagnole (1).

Nov. 10. The Goddess of Reason introduced into the Convention. Shortly after, a still more indecent exhibition took place before the Assembly. The celebrated prophecy of Father Beauregard was accomplished,—"Beauty without modesty was seen usurping the place of the Holy of Holies!" Hébert, Chaumette, and their associates, appeared at the bar, and declared that "God did not exist, and that the worship of Reason was to be substituted in His stead." A veiled female, arrayed in blue drapery, was brought into the Assembly; and Chaumette, taking her by the hand, "Mortals," said he, "cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a God, whom your fears have created. Henceforth acknowledge no divinity but Reason. I offer you its noblest and purest image; if you must have idols, sacrifice only to such as this."—When, letting fall the veil, he exclaimed, "Fall before the august Senate of Freedom, oh! Veil of Reason!" At the same time, the goddess appeared personified by a celebrated beauty, the wife of Momoro, a printer, known in more than one character to most of the Convention. The goddess, after being embraced by the president, was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted, amidst an immense crowd, to the cathedral of Notre-Dame, to take the place of the Deity. There she was elevated on the high altar, and received the adoration of all present, while the young women, her attendants, whose alluring looks already sufficiently indicated their profession, retired into the chapels round the choir, where every species of licentiousness and obscenity was indulged in without control, with hardly any veil from the public gaze. To such a length was this carried, that Robespierre afterwards declared that Chaumette deserved death for the abominations he had permitted on that occasion. Thenceforward that ancient edifice was called the *Temple of Reason* (2).

Universal abandonment of Religion, and closing of Churches. The services of religion were now universally abandoned; the pulpits were deserted throughout all the revolutionized districts; baptisms ceased; the burial service was no longer heard; the sick received no communion; the dying no consolation. A heavier anathema than that of Papal power pressed upon the peopled realm of France; the anathema of Heaven, inflicted by the madness of her own inhabitants. The village bells were silent; Sunday was obliterated. Infancy entered the

(1) Th. v. 429, 430. Lac. x. 300, 302. Toul. iv. 124.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. iii. 192-196. Lac. x. 307. 308. Toul. iv. 124. Th. v. 431, 432. Mig. ii. 296.

world without a blessing; age left it without a hope. In lieu of the services of the church, the licentious fêtes of the new worship were performed by the most abandoned females; it appeared as if the Christian truth had been succeeded by the orgies of the Babylonian priests, or the grossness of the Hindoo theocracy. On every tenth day a Revolutionary leader ascended the pulpit, and preached atheism to the bewildered audience; Marat was universally deified, and even the instrument of death sanctified by the name of the "Holy Guillotine." On all the public cemeteries the inscription was placed, "Death is an Eternal Sleep." The comedian Monort, in the church of St.-Roch, carried impiety to its utmost length. "God! if you exist," said he, "avenge your injured name. *I bid you defiance*; you remain silent; you dare not launch your thunders; who after this will believe in your existence?" It is by slower means, and the operation of general laws, that the destinies of Providence are accomplished. A more convincing proof of divine government than the destruction of the blasphemer was about to be afforded; the annihilation of the guilty by their own hands, and the consequence of the passions which they themselves had unchained; the voluntary return of a rebellious people to the faith of their fathers, from the experienced impossibility of living without its precepts (1).

After an interval of seven years, the worship of Christianity was restored by Napoléon, with the general approbation of the French people. But a ruinous effect was produced by this long cessation of its services; a great portion of the youth of France, now occupying the most important situations in the country, were brought up without receiving any religious impressions in early life. This evil is still severely felt; its consequences are irremediable; it has for ever disqualified the French from the enjoyment of freedom, because it has extinguished the feelings of duty, on which alone it can be founded in the young and influential part of the people.

General and excessive dissolution of Manners. The most sacred relations of life were at the same period placed on a new footing suited to the extravagant ideas of the times. Marriage was declared a civil contract, binding only during the pleasure of the contracting parties. Divorce immediately became general; the corruption of manners reached a pitch unknown during the worst days of the monarchy; the vices of the marquisses and countesses of Louis XV descended to the shopkeepers and artisans of Paris. So indiscriminate did concubinage become, that, by a decree of the Convention, bastards were declared entitled to an equal share of the succession with legitimate children. Mademoiselle Arnould a celebrated comedian, expressed the public feeling when she called marriage "*the Sacrament of Adultery*." The divorces in Paris in the first three months of 1793 were 562, while the marriages were only 1785; a proportion probably unexampled among mankind. The consequences soon became apparent. Before the era of the Consulate, one-half of the whole births in Paris were illegitimate; and at this moment, notwithstanding the apparent reformation of manners which has taken place since the Restoration, the dissolution of manners is extreme (2).

A decree of the Convention suppressed all the academies, public schools, and colleges, even those of medicine and surgery; their whole revenues were confiscated. New schools, on a plan traced out by Condorcet, were directed; but no efficient steps were taken to ensure their establishment, and education

(1) Lac. x. 308, 309, 331. Toul. iv. 124. Mig. ii. 299.

(2) Dupin, i. 79. Lac. x. 332, 333. Burke, viii. 176. Reg. Peace.

for a number of years ceased through all France. One establishment only, that of the Polytechnic School, takes its date from this melancholy epoch. During the long night, the whole force of the human mind was bent upon the mathematical sciences, which flourished from the concentration of its powers, and were soon illuminated by the most splendid light (1).

Confiscation  
of the prop-  
erty of Hos-  
pitals and  
the Poor.

In the general havoc, even the establishments of charity were not overlooked. The revenues of hospitals and humane institutions throughout France were confiscated by the despots whom the people had seated on the throne; their domains sold as part of the national property. Soon the terrible effects of the suppression of all permanent sources of relief to the destitute became apparent; mendicity advanced with frightful steps; and the condition of the poor throughout France become such as to call forth the loudest lamentations from the few enlightened philanthropists who still followed the car of the Revolution (2).

Arrest and  
death of  
Bailly.

The Decemvirs next proceeded to destroy their former friends, and the earliest supporters of the Revolution. Bailly, Mayor of Paris, and President of the Assembly, on occasion of the celebrated Jeu de Paume, was arrested and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. His profound and eloquent scientific researches, his great services in the cause of liberty, his enlightened philanthropy, pleaded in vain before that sanguinary court. The recollection of the Champ-de-Mars, of the red flag, and the courageous stand which he had made with La Fayette against the fury of the multitude, was present to the minds of his prosecutors. The witnesses adduced spoke against him with an unusual degree of asperity. He was condemned to die, and in his case, as he had foreseen, a refinement of cruelty was exerted. The Champ-de-Mars was selected as the place of his execution; an immense crowd of vindictive Jacobins, among whom were a large proportion of women, and persons whom he had saved from famine during his mayoralty, assembled to witness his death; on foot, in the most dreadful weather, the unhappy victim was led behind the guillotine during a tedious passage of two hours, from the Champ-de-Mars, to which he was first brought, to the place finally fixed on for his execution opposite Chaillot. During this passage he frequently fell; he was assailed with hisses and pelted with mud; and the first President of the Assembly received several inhuman blows from the populace. At the Champ-de-Mars, the red flag, emblematic of the martial law which he had authorized, was burnt over his head, and Bailly was led again on foot, amidst a drenching fall of snow and sleet, to the banks of the river, where he was executed. "You tremble, Bailly," said one of the spectators. "My friend," said the old man, "it is only from cold (3)."

Of Barnave  
and Condor-  
cet.

The eloquent Barnave, one of the most upright members of the Constituent Assembly, was soon after condemned, notwithstanding a defence by himself of unrivalled pathos and ability. Duport-Dutertre, formerly minister of Louis XVI on the same day shared the same fate. Condorcet had fled when the lists of proscription were first prepared by the victors on the 2d June; for eight months he was concealed in Paris, and employed the tedious hours of solitude in composing his celebrated "*Esquisse des Progrès de l'Esprit humain*," a work in which much learning is illustrated by fervid

(1) Lac. x. 321, 322.

(2) Rapport sur la Mendicité, par Liancourt, ii. 130.

20. Lac. x. 333.

(3) Lac. x. 292. Th. x. 294, 396, 397. Toul. iv.

eloquence; and the warm but visionary anticipations of future improvement were indulged, amidst the deepest circumstances of present disaster. In gratitude to the hostess who had sheltered him, he wrote a poem, containing a sentiment descriptive of the feelings of his party during those melancholy times,—

Ils m'ont dit : " Choisis d'être oppresseur ou victime ;  
J'embrassai le malheur et leur laissai le crime."

Terrified by the numerous lists of persons condemned for concealing the proscribed, he declared to his generous protector the resolution to leave her. "I must not remain any longer with you; I am *hors la loi*."—"But we," replied she, "are not *hors de l'humanité*." He set out, nevertheless, disguised as a common labourer; at the village of Clamart, the fineness of his linen awakened the suspicion of his landlady, who had him arrested and sent to prison, where next morning he was found dead from the effects of a speedy poison, which, like many others in those days of terror, he constantly carried about his person (1).

And Cus-  
tine.

General Custine, who commanded the army of Flanders, at the time of the capture of Valenciennes by the English, was denounced by the agents of the Convention, and shortly after brought to the Revolutionary Tribunal. His beautiful and gifted daughter-in-law in vain sat daily by his side, and exerted herself to the utmost in his behalf; in vain General Baraguay-d'Hilliers, with generous courage, supported him by his military knowledge and experience. Her grace, and the obvious injustice of the accusation, produced some impression on the judges; and a few inclined to an acquittal; immediately the Revolutionary Tribunal itself was complained of at the Jacobin Club. "It gives me great pain," said Hébert, at that great centre of the Revolution, "to be obliged to denounce an authority which was the hope of the patriots, and hitherto has so well deserved their confidence. But the Revolutionary Tribunal is on the point of absolving a guilty person, in favour of whom the beauties of Paris are moving heaven and earth. The daughter of Custine, as skilful an actress in this city as her father was at the head of the armies, solicits every one in his behalf." Robespierre made some cutting remarks on the spirit of chicanery and form, which had taken possession of the Tribunal, and strongly supported his guilt. The consequences were decisive; he was found guilty, and condemned amidst the rapturous applause of the Jacobins and Cordeliers who filled the court. He was sent to the scaffold, and, though shaken for a moment, died firmly. The crowd murmured because he appeared on the fatal chariot with a minister of religion by his side. General Houchard, the second in command, who had denounced Custine, notwithstanding his recent success over the Allies at Hoondschoote, shortly after shared the same fate; and Baraguay-d'Hilliers, reserved for higher destinies, was sent to prison, from whence he was only delivered by the fall of Robespierre (2).

Trial and  
Execution  
of the Duke  
of Orleans.

The Duke of Orléans, the early and interested instigator of the Revolution, was its next victim. Robespierre, at the hall of the Jacobins, had already pronounced his doom; the Assembly, once his hireling adulators, unanimously supported the proposal. In vain he alleged

(1) Th. ix. 286, 287.

(2) Lac. xi. 296, 297. Th. v. 297, 299. Toul. iv. 62, 131. Th. x. 297.

his accession to the disorders of 5th October, his support of the Revolt of August 10, his vote against the King on January 17; his condemnation speedily was pronounced. He demanded only one favour, which was granted, that his execution should be postponed for twenty-four hours. In the interval, he had a repast prepared with care, on which he feasted with more than usual avidity; when led out to execution, he gazed for a time, with a smile on his countenance, on the Palais-Royal, the scene of his former orgies. He was detained above a quarter of an hour in front of that palace by order of Robespierre, who had in vain asked his daughter's hand in marriage, and had promised, if he would relent in that extremity, to excite a tumult which would save his life. Depraved as he was, he had too much honourable feeling left to consent to such a sacrifice, and remained in expectation of death, without giving the expected signal of acquiescence for twenty minutes, when he was permitted to continue his journey to the scaffold. He met his fate with stoical fortitude; and it is pleasing to have to record one redeeming trait at the close of a life stained by so much selfish passion and guilty ambition,—he preferred death to sacrificing his daughter to the tyrant. Never was more strongly exemplified the effect of materialism and infidelity, in rendering men callous to futurity, and degrading a naturally noble disposition. The multitude applauded his execution; not a voice was raised in his favour, though it was mainly composed of the very men who had been instigated by his adulators, and fed by his extravagance (1).

The destruction of Bailly, Custine, and the Duke of Orléans, annihilated the party attached to a constitutional monarchy. The early objects of the Revolution were thus frustrated, its first supporters destroyed by the passions they had awakened among the people. The overthrow of the Gironde extinguished the hope of a Republic; the massacres of the Constitutionals, that of a limited monarchy. The prophecy of Vergniaud was rapidly approaching its accomplishment; the Revolution, like Saturn, was successively devouring all its progeny.

Two parties, however, still remained opposed on different principles to the Decemvirs, and whose destruction was indispensable to their despotic authority. These parties were the Moderates and the Anarchists. At the head of the former were Danton and Camille-Desmoulins; the latter was supported by the powerful Municipality of Paris (2).

Estrangement of the Dantonists and Ruling Power. It has been already observed, that Danton and his party were strangers to the real objects of the Revolt on May 31. They aided the populace in the struggle with the Convention; but they had no intention of establishing the oligarchy, which directed, and finally triumphed by their exertions. After the overthrow of the Assembly, Robespierre urged Danton to retire to the country. "A tempest is arising," said he; "the Jacobins have not forgot your relations with Dumouriez. They hate your manners; your voluptuous and indolent habits are at variance with their energy. Withdraw for a moment; trust to a friend, who will watch over your dangers, and warn you of the first moment to return." Danton followed his advice, nothing loath to get quit of a faction of which he began to dread the excesses; and his party were entirely excluded from the Dictatorial government (3).

The leaders of this party were Danton, Philippeaux, Camille-Desmoulins,

(1) Hist. de la Conv. iii. 180. Lac. xi. 239, 290. Toul. iv. 121, 122.

(2) Mig. ii. 300.

(3) Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 91. Mig. ii. 301.



Fabre-d'Églantine, and Westermann, the tried leader of August 10. Their principles were, that terror was to be used only for the establishment of freedom, not made an instrument of oppression in the hands of those who had gained it; they wished above all things, that the Republicans should remain masters of the field of battle, but having done so, use their victory with moderation. In pursuance of these principles, they reprobated the violent proceedings of the Dictators after the victory of 31st May had ensured the triumph of the populace; desired to humble the Anarchists of the Municipality, to put an end to the Revolutionary Tribunal, discharge from confinement those imprisoned as suspected persons, and dissolve the despotic Committees of government (1).

The other party, that of the Municipality, carried their ambition and extravagance even beyond the Decemvirs. Instead of government they professed a desire to establish an extreme local democracy; instead of religion, the consecration of materialism. As usual, in democratic contests, they carried their revolutionary principles beyond the dominant faction, and strove thus to supplant them in the affections of the populace. They had witnessed with extreme dissatisfaction, the Committees usurp all the powers of government after the Revolt of 31st May, and thus reap for themselves all the fruits of the victory which their forces had mainly contributed to achieve. In cruelty, obscenity, and atheism, they exceeded the Dictatorial Government; but these were only means to an end; in the passion for tyrannical power, they yielded to none, provided only it was wielded by themselves (2).

These two parties, as usual in civil dissensions, mutually reproached each other with the public calamities. The Anarchists incessantly charged the Moderates with corruption, and being the secret agents of foreign courts. "It is you," replied the Dantonists, "who are the real accomplices of the stranger; every thing draws you towards them, both the common violence of your language, and the joint design to overturn every thing in France. Behold the Magistracy, which arrogates to itself more than legislative authority; which regulates every thing, police, subsistence, worship; which has substituted a new religion for the old one; replaced one superstition by another still more absurd; which openly preaches atheism, and causes itself to be imitated by all the Municipalities in France. Consider those war-offices, from whence so many extortioners issue, who carry desolation into the provinces, and discredit the Revolution by their conduct. Observe the Municipality and the Committees—what do they propose to themselves, if it is not to usurp the Executive and Legislative authority, to dispossess the Convention, and dissolve the government? Who could suggest such a design, but the external enemies of France (3)!"

Camille-Desmoulins, in a celebrated pamphlet, entitled, "*Le vieux Cordelier*," drew, under a professed description of Rome under the Emperors, a striking picture of the horrors of that gloomy period. "Every thing," said he, "under that terrible government, was made the ground-work of suspicion. Has a citizen popularity? He is a rival of the Dictator, who might create disturbances. Does he avoid society, and live retired by his fireside? That is to ruminate in private on sinister designs. Is he rich? That renders the danger the greater, that he will corrupt the citizens by his largesses. Is he poor? None so dangerous as those who have

(1) Th. vi. 6, 7. Lac. Pr. Hist. ii. 91. Mig. ii.

(2) Th. ii. 298. Mig. ii. 298. Toul. vi. 286.

(3) Th. vi. 10, 11.

nothing to lose. Is he thoughtful and melancholy? He is revolving what he calls the calamities of his country. Is he gay and dissipated? He is concealing, like Cæsar, ambition under the mask of pleasure. Is he virtuous and austere? He has constituted himself the censor of the government. Is he a philosopher, an orator, and a poet? He will soon acquire more consideration than the rulers of the state. Has he acquired reputation in war? His talents only render him the more formidable, and make it indispensable to get quit of his authority. The natural death of a celebrated man is become so rare, that historians transmit it as a matter worthy of record to future ages. Even the death of so many great and good citizens seems a less calamity than the insolence and scandalous fortune of their denouncers. Every day the accuser makes his triumphal entry into the palace of death, and reaps the rich harvest which is presented to his hands. The Tribunals, once the protectors of life and property, have become the organs of butchery, where robbery and murder have usurped the names of confiscation and punishment (1).” Such is the picture drawn of the effect of popular government by the man who was called the first apostle of liberty! And how striking the coincidence, that in drawing with the pencil of Tacitus a picture of Roman servitude under Nero and Caligula, he was exhibiting a portrait which none could fail to recognize of France, under the government which his own democratic transports had contributed to impose upon its inhabitants.

Efforts of  
Danton to  
detach  
Robespierre  
from the  
Municipal-  
ity.

Danton and his friends made the greatest efforts to detach Robespierre from the sanguinary faction with whom he acted, and at first with some appearance of success. He had taken some steps towards a moderate government; in the Convention he had publicly stopped the trial of the seventy-three deputies, who were detained in prison, in consequence of having protested against the arrest of the Girondists. He had reprobated the ultra-revolutionary measures of Hébert and the Municipality, and brought about a decree of the Convention, recognising the existence of the Supreme Being. He had not only read, but corrected the proof-sheets of the “Vieux Cordelier,” where he was adjured in the most touching language to embrace the sentiments of humanity. Already his popularity, in consequence, was on the wane. He was accused of *Moderantisme*, and the groups of the Jacobins began to murmur at his proceedings (2).

Robespierre, with all his fanaticism in favour of democracy, felt, as strongly as any man in France, the necessity both of some religious impressions to form a curb upon the passions of the people, and of a strong central government to check their excesses. He early felt a horror at the infidel atrocities of the Municipality, and saw that such principles, if persisted in, would utterly disorganize society throughout France. With the sanguinary spirit of the times, he resolved to effect it by their extermination. The first indication of this determination appeared in his speech at the Jacobin Club in the end of

Nov. 21. November. “Let men,” said he, “animated by a pure zeal, lay upon the altar of their country the useless and pompous monuments of superstition; but by what title does hypocrisy come here, to mingle its influence with that of patriotism? What right have men, hitherto unknown in the career of the Revolution, to come into the midst of you, to seek in passing events a false popularity, to hurry on the patriots to fatal measures,

(1) *Vieux Cordelier*, Rev. Mem. xlii. p. 50, 51.  
53.

(2) *Mig. ii.* 305, 307. *Lac. Pr. Hist.* ii. 136, 138.  
*Vieux Cordelier*, 73.

and to throw among them the seeds of trouble and discord? By what title do they disturb the existing worship in the name of Liberty, and attack fanaticism by a band of another kind of fanatics? There are men who would go farther: who, under the pretence of destroying superstition, would establish atheism itself. Every philosopher, every individual, is at liberty to adopt whatever opinion he pleases: whoever imputes it to him as a crime is a fool: but the legislator would be a thousand times more blameable, who should act on such a system. Atheism is an aristocratic belief. The idea of a Supreme Being, who watches over oppressed innocence, and punishes triumphant crime, is, and ever will be, popular. The people, the unfortunate, will ever applaud it; it will never find detractors, but among the rich and the guilty (1). *If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent his being (2).*"

But while thus preparing the way for the destruction of the Anarchists, Robespierre saw that it was necessary to make a sacrifice to the Revolutionary party, in order to avoid the blasting imputation of moderation, and keep up his reputation for unflinching resolution and incorruptible integrity. For this purpose, he resolved, at the same time, that he should cut off Hébert, Chaumette, and the Anarchists; to strike with equal severity against Danton, Camille-Desmoulins, and the moderate party. By so doing, he would keep up the appearance of even-handed justice, establish the supremacy of the Committee of Public Safety over all the factions in the state, and remove the only rival that stood between him and sole dominion (3).

Though ignorant that his destruction was resolved on by the all-powerful Committee of Public Safety, Danton was aware that for some months he had been waning in popularity, and he loudly demanded at the Jacobins that the grounds of complaint should be exhibited against him. Robespierre instantly ascended the Tribune. "Danton," said he, "demands a commission to examine into his conduct: I consent to it, if he thinks it can be of any service to him. He demands a statement of the grounds of complaint against him: I agree to it. Danton, you are accused of being an emigrant; of having retired to Switzerland; of having feigned illness to conceal your flight; of being desirous to become Regent under Louis XVII; of having made arrangements at a fixed on time to proclaim that remnant of the Capets; of being the chief of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy; of being a worse enemy to France than either Pitt or Cobourg, England, Austria, or Prussia; of having filled the Mountain with your creatures. It is said that we need not disquiet ourselves about the inferior agents of foreign powers; that their conspiracies merit only contempt; but you, you alone, should be led out to the scaffold!" Loud applauses followed this bold declaration; when they had subsided, he continued turning to his astonished rival, "Do you not know, Danton, that the more a man is gifted with energy and public spirit, the more the public enemies conspire for his overthrow! Do you not know, does not every one who hears me know, that that is an infallible test of real virtue? If the defender of liberty was not calumniated, it would be a proof that we had no longer either generals, or priests, or nobles to fear." He then demanded that all those who had any thing to reproach against Danton should come forward; but none, after such a declaration, ventured to say a word. Upon that, amidst the applause of the meeting, he received the

(1) Th. vi. 15, 17.

(3) Th. vi. 186, 187.

(2) "Si Dieu n'existait pas il faudrait l'inventer."

—TAIZAS, vi. 17.

fraternal embrace from the President. By this hypocritical conduct, Robespierre both ascertained the extent of the public feeling against his great rival, and threw him off his guard by feigned expressions of regard (1).

Dec. 4, 1793. Shortly after, a new decree, augmenting the despotic powers of the Committee of Public Safety, was passed. "Anarchy," said Billaud-Varennes, in the preamble of the Report on which the decree was founded, "menaces every republic alike in its cradle and its old age. Our part is to strive against it." On this principle, the decree enacted, that a Bulletin of the Laws should be established; that four individuals should have the exclusive right of framing it; that it should be printed on a particular paper and type, and sent down to the provinces by post. The Convention was at the same time declared the "Centre of Impulsion of Government,"—a dubious phrase, under which was veiled the despotic authority of the Committees. The authority of the Departmental Assemblies was abolished, for every thing except matters of local administration; and they were forbidden, under pain of death, to correspond on any political matter with each other, raise forces or taxes of their own authority, or correspond with or receive instructions from any body but the Committees at Paris. Thus the liberties of the provinces were rapidly perishing under the despotic sway of the Committees of Public Safety; and France was already beginning to enter the bloody path, which leads from democratic anarchy to regular government (2).

Meanwhile, the strife of the Dantonists and Anarchists became daily more conspicuous. One of the latter, Ronsin, had affixed over all the walls of Paris a placard, in which he declared, that out of 140,000 souls at Lyon, 1,500 only were not accomplices of the revolt in that city, and that before February all the guilty should perish, and their bodies be floated by the Rhone to Toulon. Camille-Desmoulins vigorously attacked this atrocious faction, and in an especial manner fastened on the infamous Hebert, whom he accused of being "a miserable intriguer, a caterer for the guillotine, a traitor paid by Pitt; a wretch who had received 200,000 francs at different times from almost all the factions in the Republic, to calumniate their adversaries; a thief and robber, who had been expelled from being a lackey in the theatre for theft, and now pretended to drench France with blood by his prostituted journal." Such was the man, on the testimony of the Revolutionists themselves, on whose evidence Marie-Antoinette had been condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal. "It is in vain," he added, "to think of stifling my voice by threats of arrest: We all know that the Anarchists are preparing a new revolt, like the 31st May; but we may say with Brutus and Cicero, 'We fear too much exile, poverty, and death.' When our soldiers are daily braving death in sight of the enemy's batteries in the cause of freedom, shall we, their unworthy leaders, be intimidated by the menaces of the Père Duchesne, or prevented by him from achieving a still greater victory over the ultra-Revolutionists, who would ruin the Revolution, by staining every step it makes with gore (3)?"

Secret  
agreement  
between  
Robespierre  
and the Mu-  
nicipality.

While the parties were in this state of exasperation at each other, the Committee of Public Safety boldly interposed between them, and resolved to make their discords the means of destroying both. Profiting with political dexterity by this singular situation of the parties, Robespierre and the Members of the Municipality came to an under-

(1) Th. vi. 21, 22.  
(2) Th. vi. 30, 31.

(3) Th. vi. 34, 128, 129. *Vieux Cordelier*, Nos. 3, 9, 17.

standing, the condition of which was the mutual abandonment of their personal friends. Robespierre gave up Danton, Camille-Desmoulins, and their supporters, to the vengeance of the Municipality; and they surrendered Hébert, Chaumette, Ronsin, Clootz, and their party, to the Decemvirs. By this arrangement, two important objects were gained; a formidable faction was destroyed, and a rival to the reputation of the Dictator was removed (1).

Announcement of the Project in the Convention. Robespierre first announced this project of double vengeance in the Assembly. "Without," said he, "all the tyrants of the earth are conspiring against you; within, all their friends are aiding their efforts; they will continue to do so till hope is severed from crime. We must stifle the exterior and internal enemies of the Republic, or perish with it. In such circumstances, the only principles of government are to govern the people by the force of Reason, and their enemies by the force of Terror. The spring of a popular government in peace is Virtue; in a revolution, it is Virtue and TERROR: Virtue, without which Terror is fatal—Terror, without which Virtue is impotent. The government of a revolution is the despotism of liberty against tyranny. The opposite factions with which we have to contend march under different banners, and by different routes; but their object is the same, the disorganization of the popular government, and the triumph of tyranny. The one tends to this object by its leaning to weakness; the other, by its tendency to excess." "The one of these factions," said St.-Just, "would change liberty into a Bacchanalian; the other, into a prostitute." This discourse was immediately printed and circulated through all France (2).

The Committee of Public Safety, through their organs, Robespierre and St.-Just, uniformly veiled their despotic advances, under the cloak of forwarding the Revolution, and represented the opposite factions as both acting under the direction, and for the benefit of external force. "Foreign powers," said the former, "have vomited into France able villains, whom they retain in their pay. They deliberate in our administrations, insinuate themselves into our sections and our clubs, sit in the Convention, and eternally direct the Counter-Revolution by the same means. They flutter round us, surprise our secrets, caress our passions, and seek to make us converts to their opinions. By turns they drive us to exaggeration or weakness, excite in Paris the fanaticism of the new worship, and in la Vendée the resistance of the old; assassinate Marat and Lepelletier, and mingle with the group who would defy their remains; at one time spread plenty among the people, at another reduce them to all the horrors of famine; circulate and withdraw the metallic currency, and thus occasion the extraordinary changes in the value of money; profit, in fine, by every accident, to turn it against France and the Revolution." Such is the invariable policy of revolutionary parties, to impute to strangers the natural effect of their own passions and vices. This speech was followed by a decree, sending Biron, Custine's son, Dietrich, mayor of Strasbourg, and all the friends of Dumouriez, Custine, and Houchard, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, from whence they were soon after conducted to the scaffold (3).

"Citizens," said St.-Just, a few days after, "you wish a Republic; if you are not prepared at the same time to wish for what constitutes it, you will be buried under its ruins. Now, what constitutes a Republic is the destruc-

(1) Mig. ii. 306. Th. vi. 186, 187. Lac. ii. 139. (3) Th. vi. 120, 121.

(2) Mig. ii. 307. Th. vi. 155, 156.

tion of every thing which opposes it. You are culpable towards the Republic if you have pity on the captives; you are culpable if you do not support virtue; you are culpable if you do not support terror. What do you propose, you who would not strike terror into the wicked? What do you propose, you who would sever virtue from happiness? You shall perish, you who only act the patriot till bought by the stranger, or placed in office by the government; you, of the indulgent faction, who would save the wicked; you, of the foreign faction, who would be severe only on the friends of freedom. Measures are already taken; you are surrounded. Thanks to the genius of France, Liberty has risen victorious from one of the greatest dangers she ever encountered; the terror she will strike into her enemies, will for ever purge the earth of the conspirators." The Convention, awed by the tyrants, invested the committees with full power to crush the conspiracies. They decreed that *Terror and Virtue* should be the order of the day (1).

Proscription of the Anarchists. The Anarchists were the first to feel the vengeance of their former supporters. They in vain endeavoured to rouse their ancient partisans in the Commune to support their cause; terror had frozen every heart. Their leaders made the utmost efforts to rouse the people to insurrection; and innumerable placards, ascribing the whole public evils, and in particular the famine which prevailed, to the Convention, appeared in the markets, and in all the populous quarters of Paris. They even went so far as to propose that the whole Convention should be dissolved, a new one assembled, a dictator named, and an executive government organized. But all the efforts of Hébert, with his infamous journal,—*Momoro*, with the resolutions of the Section Marat, which he had roused to espouse their cause,—and Vincent, with his frenzied followers, could not produce a popular movement. The Municipality held back; the Jacobins were ruled by the Committee of Public Safety and Robespierre. Driven from the Club of the Jacobins, where the Decemvirs predominated, they sought refuge in that of the Cordeliers, but all to no purpose. They were arrested by their former agent, Henriot, at the head of the armed force which they had so often wielded against the government, and sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal, to stand trial for a conspiracy to put a tyrant at the head of affairs. Hébert, Gobel, Ronsin, Chaumette, Clootz, Momoro, and Vincent, were all condemned. They evinced the native baseness of their dispositions by their cowardice in their last moments. The apostate Bishop Gobel almost sunk under his terrors; the infamous Hébert wept from weakness. The numerous captives in the prisons of Paris could hardly believe their eyes when they beheld the tyrants, who had sent so many to execution, and who were preparing a new massacre in the prisons, consigned, in their turn, to the scaffold. The populace, with their usual inconstancy, manifested joy at their punishment, and, in particular, loaded with maledictions the very Hébert, for whose deliverance from the arrest of the Convention, they had so recently before put all Paris in insurrection (2).

Such was the public avidity to see the execution of these leaders, late so popular, that considerable sums were realized by the sale of seats on the fatal chariots, to witness their agonies, and on the tables and benches arranged round the scaffold. Hébert made no attempt to conceal his terrors: He sunk

(1) *Mig.* ii. 309. *Lac.* ii. 145.

(2) *Lac.* ii. 144. *Th.* vi. 162, 168, 179, 182. *Mig.* ii. 310.

down at every step (1); and the vile populace, so recently his worshippers, followed the car, mimicking the cry of the persons who hawked his journal about the streets: "Father Duchesne is in a devil of a rage (2)."

The victory of the Decemvirs was complete. They followed up the blow by disbanding the Revolutionary force stationed at Paris, and diminishing the power of the Committees of Sections; all steps, and not unimportant ones, to the establishment of a regular government. The Municipality of Paris, subdued by terror, was compelled to send a deputation to the Assembly, returning thanks for the arrest and punishment of its own members (3).

Rapture of  
Danton and  
Robespierre. Danton, and his partisans had not long the satisfaction of exulting over the destruction of the Anarchists. Robespierre and he had a meeting in the house of the former, but it led to no accommodation; Danton complained violently of the conduct of his former friend; Robespierre maintained a haughty reserve. "I know," said Danton, "all the hatred which the committee bear me, but I do not fear it."—"You are wrong," said Robespierre, "they have no bad intentions against you; but it is well to be explicit."—"To be explicit," rejoined Danton, "good faith is necessary. Without doubt it is necessary to coerce the Royalists; but we should not confound the innocent with the guilty."—"And who has told you," said Robespierre, "that one innocent person has perished?" Danton upon this, turning to the friend who accompanied him, said with a bitter smile: "What say you—Not one innocent has perished!" They parted mutually exasperated; all intercourse between them immediately ceased (4).

His Arrest. The friends of Danton now conjured him to take steps to ensure his own safety; but no resource remained to ward off the threatened blow. The Club of the Cordeliers indeed was devoted to him; and the Convention in secret leaned to his side; but these bodies had no real power, the armed force was entirely in the hands of the Committee. Having failed in rousing public opinion by means of the journals of his party, and the exertions of his friends in the Convention, what other expedients remained? "I would rather," said he, "be guillotined than become guillotiner; my life is not worth the trouble of preserving; I am weary of existence. Set off into exile! do you suppose that one carries their country with the sole of their shoe?" On the day before his arrest, he received notice that his imprisonment was under the consideration of the Committee, and he was again pressed to fly; but, after a moment's deliberation, he only answered, "They dare not." In the night his house was surrounded, and he was arrested, along with Camille-Desmoulins, Lacroix, Hérault de Séchelles, and Westermann. On entering the prison, he cordially welcomed the captives who flocked to behold him (5). "Gentlemen," said he, "I hoped to have been the means of delivering you all from this place; but here I am among you, and God only knows where this will end." He was immediately afterwards shut up in a solitary cell, the same which Hébert had recently before occupied. On entering it he exclaimed, "At last I perceive that in revolutions the supreme power finally rests with the most abandoned (6)."

During the short period that elapsed before his execution, his mind, in a

(1) Th. vi. 182.

(2) "Il est b——t en colère le Père Duchesne." In recounting such scenes, the spirit is lost if the very words are not used.

(3) Mig. ii. 310. Lac. ii. 144.

(4) Mig. ii. 308. Th. vi. 189.

(5) Riouffe, 67. Mig. ii. 310, 311. Th. vi. 190.

(6) "Enfin je vois que dans les révolutions l'autorité reste toujours aux plus scélérats."—Rioux, p. 67. A memorable sentiment coming from such lips.

distracted state reverted to the innocence of his earlier years. "He spoke incessantly," says his fellow-captive, Riouffe, "of trees, flowers, and the country." Then giving way to unavailing regret, he exclaimed, "It was just a year ago, that I was the means of instituting the Revolutionary Tribunal: May God and man forgive me for what I did; but it was not that it might become the scourge of humanity (1)."

Violent Agitation in the Assembly. His arrest produced a violent agitation in Paris; the Convention on the following morning was shaken by a general inquietude, which broke out in half suppressed murmurs. "Citizens!" said Legendre, "four of the National Representatives have been arrested during the night: Danton is one, I am ignorant of the others. Danton is as innocent as myself, and yet he is in irons. His accusers, without doubt, are afraid that his answers would destroy the charges brought against him; but you are bound to do justice; and I demand, that before the report of the Committee is received, he be examined in your presence." The proposition was favourably received, and for a moment the Assembly seemed disposed to shake off its fetters, till Robespierre mounted the Tribune. "From the trouble for long unknown which reigns in the Assembly; from the agitation produced by the words you have just heard, it is evident that a great interest is at stake, and that the point now to be determined, is whether the safety of a few individuals is to prevail over that of the country: We shall see this day whether the Convention has courage to break a pretended idol, or to suffer it in its fall to overwhelm the Assembly and the people of France. Danton, you shall answer to inflexible justice,—let us examine your conduct. Accomplice, in every criminal enterprise, you ever espoused the cause which was adverse to freedom: you intrigued with Mirabeau and Dumouriez: with Hébert and Hérault de Sechelles, you have made yourself the slave of tyranny. Mirabeau, who contemplated a change of dynasty, felt the value of your audacity, and secured it: you have abandoned all your former principles, and nothing more was heard of you till the massacre in the Champ-de-Mars. At every crisis you have deserted the public interest: you have ever attached yourself to the traitor party." The terror inspired by these words restored silence to the Convention; and at the same time, St.-Just, followed by the other members of the Committee of Public Safety, entered the Hall. With slow steps, a sombre and decided air, they approached the tribune, when Robespierre again addressed Legendre. "Go on; it is well that all the associates of the conspirators we have arrested should at once make themselves known. You have heard of the despotism of the committees, as if the confidence which the people have reposed in you, and which you have transferred to the Committees, was not the surest guarantee of their patriotism. You affect to be afraid; but I say whoever trembles at this moment is guilty; for never did innocence fear the vigilance of the public authorities." Unanimous applause, from hands shaking with fright, followed these words. None ventured to incur the terrible imputation,—terror froze every heart; and St.-Just, without opposition, ascended the Tribune (2).

He there made a detailed exposition of the grounds of accusation against the moderate party, recounted their private irregularities, their unpardonable clemency; charged them with being accomplices in every conspiracy, from that of the Royalists, whom they overthrew on the 10th August, to that

(1) Mig. ii. 312. Th. vi. 162 Riouffe, 67.

(2) Mig. ii. 312, 313. Lac. ii. 145. Th. vi. 194. 195. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 338.



of the Anarchists, whose treason had so recently been punished. The utter absurdity of imputing to them such contradictory crimes, and supposing them in league with their bitterest enemies, was too glaring to escape observation; but the Assembly, mastered by fear, crouched beneath their tyrants, and unanimously sent the accused to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The galleries imitated their example. From those benches whence had issued so often bursts of applause at his speeches, were now heard only fierce demands for his head. When removed to the Conciergerie, preparatory to their trial, the astonishment of the captives was as great as when they entered the Luxembourg. "My late brethren," said Danton, "understand nothing of government; I leave every thing in the most deplorable confusion: 'Twere better to be a poor fisherman than the ruler of men. My only comfort is, that my name is attached to some decrees which will show that I was not involved in all their fury (1)."

Their Trial  
and Execu-  
tion.

On their trial they evinced their wonted firmness, and addressed the judges in unusual terms of indignation. Danton, being interrogated by the President concerning his age and profession, replied, "My name is Danton, sufficiently known in the history of the Revolution; I am thirty-five; my abode will soon be in nonentity: and my name will live in the pantheon of history." Camille-Desmoulins answered, that he was the same age as the "Sans-Culotte Jesus-Christ, when he died." Danton spoke with energy and resolution in his own defence. "My voice," said he, with that powerful organ which had been so often raised in the cause of the people, "will have no difficulty in refuting the calumnies contained in the act of accusation. Let the cowards who accuse me be brought forward; I will speedily cover them with confusion. Let the committees appear; I require them both as accusers and judges. Let them appear; they will not. It matters little what judgment you pronounce; I have already told you my abode will soon be in nonentity; my life is a burden, I am weary of it, and will rejoice in the stroke that sends me to the grave." The President rung his bell, but Danton's voice of thunder drowned the noise. "Do you not hear me?" said the President, "The voice of a man," replied Danton, "who defends his honour and his life, may well overcome your clamours." His speech was at length choked with rage, and he sat down despairing of his cause. Nevertheless, the austere indignation of his manner, the nerve of Desmoulins, the measured ability of Lacroix, rendered the judges apprehensive of a movement in the populace; to prevent which, the Convention declared the accused *hors des débats*, on pretext of their want of respect to the Court. No sooner was this decree passed, than Amar hastened with it to the Tribunal, where Danton and his friends were prolonging their indignant defence. "Here are the means," said Amar, "for stifling these wretches." Fouquier-Tinville, the public accuser, seized it with avidity, and read it to the Court: Danton rose and called the audience to witness that they had not been wanting in respect to the judges. "The time will come," said he, "when the truth will be known; I foresee the greatest calamities to France; here is the dictator unveiled." On the day following, the debates were closed before they had begun their defence, notwithstanding the most energetic remonstrance from Camille-Desmoulins, who called the audience to witness that they were murdered. The jury enclosed, and soon after the President returned, and, with a savage joy, declared the ver-

(1) Hist. de la Conv. iii. 338. Riouffe, 67. Lac. ii. 145. Thiers, vi. 198, 201. Mig. ii. 313.

dict was Guilty. The Court instantly pronounced sentence after they were removed, which was read to them in their cells in the evening. "We are sacrificed," said Danton, "to the ambition of a few dastardly brigands; but they will not long enjoy their triumph;—I drag Robespierre after me in my fall (1)."

They went to the scaffold with the stoicism so usual at that period. A numerous escort attended them, and an immense crowd was assembled, which beheld in silence their former leaders led out for execution. Camille-Desmoulins exclaimed, when seated on the fatal chariot, "This then is the recompense destined to the first apostle of Liberty." The base crowd who followed the cars loaded them with imprecations; the indignation of Camille-Desmoulins was so excessive that he tore his shirt in venting it on the people. Danton held his head erect, and cast a calm and intrepid look around him. "Do not disquiet yourself," said he, "with that vile mob." At the foot of the scaffold he advanced to embrace Héault de Séchelles, who held out his arms to receive him. The executioner interposed. "What," said he, with a bitter smile, "are you more cruel than death itself? Begone; you at least cannot prevent our lips from soon meeting in that bloody basket." For a moment after he was softened, and said, "Oh! my beloved! oh, my wife! shall I never see you more!" but immediately checking himself, exclaimed, "Danton, recollect yourself; no weakness." He ascended with a firm step, and died with unshaken constancy (2).

The wife of Camille-Desmoulins wandered incessantly round his prison during the short interval between his arrest and execution; her despair was made the pretence for declaring a new plot under the name of the "Conspiracy of the Prisons." She was arrested after his death, and sent to the scaffold with Chaumette, Gobel, and the wife of Hébert, the infamous remnant of the Anarchist faction. She died with the serenity of Charlotte Corday and Madame Roland; while her unworthy associates disgraced their sex by more than feminine weakness (3).

Thus perished the tardy but last defenders of humanity and moderation—the last who sought for peace, and advocated clemency to those who had been vanquished in the Revolution. For long after their fall, no voice was heard against the Reign of Terror; silent and unopposed, the tyrants struck redoubled blows from one end of France to the other. The Girondists had sought to prevent that fatal rule, the Dantonists to arrest it; both perished in the attempt. They perished, because they were inferior in wickedness to their opponents; they fell the victims of the humanity which lingered in their bosoms (4).

The combination of wicked men who thereafter governed France is without a parallel in the history of the world. Their power, based on the organized weight of the multitude, and the ardent co-operation of the Municipalities, every where installed by them in the possession of power, was irresistible. By them opulent cities were overturned, hundreds of thousands of deluded artisans reduced to beggary, agriculture, commerce, the arts destroyed, the foundations of every property shaken, and all the youth of the kingdom driven to the frontier, less to uphold the integrity of France, than to

(1) Mig. ii. 313. Lac. ii. 146. Pr. Hist. Th. vi. 203—212.

(2) Mig. ii. 314. Lac. ii. 146. Th. vi. 216. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 347.

(3) Lac. ii. 146. Th. vi. 220, 221.

(4) Mig. ii. 314.

protect themselves from the just vengeance which awaited them from within and without. All bowed the neck before this gigantic assemblage of wickedness. The revolutionary excesses daily increased, in consequence of the union which the constant dread of retribution produced among their perpetrators. There was no medium between taking a part in these atrocities, and falling a victim to them. Virtue seemed powerless; energy appeared only in the extremity of resignation; religion in the heroism with which death was endured. There was not a hope left for France, had it not been for the dissensions, which, as the natural result of their wickedness, sprung up among the authors of the public calamities (1).

General Re-  
sections.  
Raisless  
Power of  
Robespierre. It is impossible not to be struck, in looking back, on the fate of these different parties, with the singular and providential manner in which their crimes brought about their own punishment. No foreign interposition was necessary, no avenging angel was required to vindicate the justice of Divine administration. They fell the victims of their own atrocity, of the passions which they themselves had let loose, of the injustice of which they had given the first example to others. The Constitutionals overthrew the ancient monarchy, and formed a limited government; but their imprudence in rousing popular ambition paved the way for the 10th August, and speedily brought themselves to the scaffold: the Girondists established their favourite dream of a Republic, and were the first victims of the fury which it excited; the Dantonists roused the populace against the Gironde, and soon fell under the axe which they had prepared for their rivals: the Anarchists defied the powers of Heaven itself; but scarcely were their blasphemies uttered, when they were swept off by the partners of their bloody triumphs.

One only power remained, alone terrible, irresistible. This was the power of DEATH, wielded by a faction steeled against every feeling of humanity, dead to every principle of justice. In their iron hands, order resumed its sway from the influence of terror; obedience became universal from the extinction of hope. Silent and unresisted they led their victims to the scaffold, dreaded alike by the soldiers who crouched, the people who trembled, and the victims who suffered. The history of the world has no parallel to the horrors of that long night of suffering, because it has none to the guilt which preceded it; tyranny never assumed so hideous a form, because licentiousness never required so severe a punishment.

(1) *Hist. de la Conv.* iii. 230.

## CHAPTER XI.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1795.—PART I.

FROM THE OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE FORCING OF THE CAMP OF CÆSAR.

## ARGUMENT.

Great division of Opinion on the French Revolution in Great-Britain—Arguments against and for the War in the Country—Arguments in Parliament on the same subject—Real motives which led to its being undertaken—Parliamentary Reform—Arguments by which the Motion for it was supported; and the Arguments against it—It is rejected by the House of Commons—Traitorous Correspondence Act passed, and Prosecutions for Sedition and Treason—Preparations for War by Great-Britain and the Allies—Effect of the Death of Louis at St.-Petersburg—Treaty between England and Russia, and with Sardinia, Prussia, the Emperor, Naples, and Spain—Secret Views of Russia—Divisions between the Prussians and Austrians—Forces on both sides—Wretched state of the French Armies—Prince Cobourg, Generalissimo—Vast efforts of France—Designs of Dumouriez; and of the Allied Generals—Archduke Charles joins the Army—Repeated Disasters of the Republicans—Great sensation produced by them in Flanders—Efforts of Dumouriez—Battle of Nerwinde—Defeat of the French—Disorganization of their Army—Retreat of Dumouriez—Conferences with Prince Cobourg—His failure and Flight—Conquest of Austrian Flanders by the Allies—Defeat of Austrian projects on the Rhine—Siege of Mayence—Defeat of the attack on the Covering Army—Its fall—Congress at Antwerp to form a plan for the Campaign—Republicans forced back to Famars—Storming of the Camp there—Valenciennes and Condé invested—Siege of the former, and Blockade of the latter—They both Fall—Custine, with the Army of Flanders, takes Refuge in intrenched Camps—Rout in the Camp of Cæsar—Desperate condition of the French—General Reflections on the Events, and the ease with which France might then have been Conquered if the Allies had held together—Ruinous effect of the English Reduction of Force.

“WAR to the palace, and peace to the cottage,” was the principle of the French Revolution. Its proclamation necessarily set the two classes of society throughout Europe at variance with each other; and, instead of the ancient rivalry of kings, introduced the fiercer strife of the people. Like the Peloponnesian war, the contest thenceforth raged not only between nation and nation, but between interest and interest; a strife of opinion superseded that of glory; and in every province and every city, numbers were to be found who watched the contending parties, with opposite feelings, and sought in the victory of foreign enemies the downfall of domestic foes.

A contest between France and England has, in every age, been the greatest source of excitement to the people in both countries; but at no former period were these passions so strongly roused as at the commencement of the Revolutionary war. Not only was national rivalry, the growth of centuries, revived, but new and fiercer passions arose from the civil interests which were brought into collision. The dominant party in England regarded the war with France, not merely as a contest with a rival power, in which glory or conquest was to be won, but as a struggle for existence, in which their lives, their fortunes, and their country, were at stake. The French Republicans looked upon the accession of England to the league of their enemies, as the signal of deadly combat with the principles of freedom; and anticipated from defeat not only national humiliation, but individual ruin.

The English nobility beheld in the conquests of the Republicans the dissemination of the principles of revolution and anarchy, the spread of infidelity, the reign of the guillotine; the French Jacobins saw in the victories of the Allies the near approach of moral retribution, the revenge of injury, the empire of the sword.

Great division of opinion on the French Revolution in Great-Britain. No words can convey an adequate idea of the bitterness of party feeling which divided this country upon the breaking out of the war in 1793. England, as well as France, had talent impatient of obscurity; ardour, which demanded employment; ambition which sought distinction; passion, which required excitation. To such men, the whole body of the aristocracy became an object of uncontrollable jealousy; and nothing short of the equality proclaimed by the French rulers seemed the fit destiny of society. Hence the division of the country into Aristocrats and Democrats; the introduction of political hatred into the bosom of families, and the dissolution of many friendships which all the misfortunes of life could never have severed (1). Time heals almost all other sorrows, absence softens the worst causes of irritation, but experience has proved, that the political divisions of 1793 never were forgotten by those who were of an age to feel their influence.

Arguments against and for the war. The breaking out of the war furnished a new subject of discord between the contending parties. On the part of the opposition it was argued, that to plunge into a desperate war, for so inconsiderable an object as the opening of the Scheldt, was to incur a certain and heavy loss on account of a most trifling cause of complaint: that the whole trade with the United-Provinces was not worth one year's expense of the contest; and that while it was easy to see what England had to lose, it was difficult to conceive what she could possibly gain from the conflict she had so unnecessarily provoked: that if the spread of revolutionary opinions were the evils which, in reality, were dreaded, nothing could be imagined so likely to increase the danger as engaging in a war, because it is during its perils that the interchange of opinions is most rapid, and prejudice most certainly yields to the force of necessity: that thoughts are not to be confined by walls, nor freedom fenced in by bayonets: that the moral agents requisite for carrying the designs of tyranny into execution, become the instruments for its own destruction; and that the despots who now sought to extinguish freedom in France, would find, like the Eastern Sultan, that the forces he had brought up to avert the plague, were the means of spreading its contagion through all the provinces of his empire.

On the other hand, the Tories maintained that the war was both just and expedient; just, because the ancient allies of Britain were threatened with invasion, and the destruction of rights on which the existence of the Republic depended; expedient, because experience had proved that such an aggression could not be permitted without ruin to the vital interests of Britain: that such a violation of neutral rights came with a peculiar bad grace from France, that power having, only ten years before, successfully interfered on the footing of ancient treaties, to prevent that very act in regard to the Scheldt navigation, on the part of Austria, which was now attempted by her own forces; that if Great-Britain was to sit by and tamely behold the rights of her allies, and of all neutral powers, sacrificed by her ancient rival, there would

(1) Scott's *Napoléon*, i. 280.

soon be an end, not only to her foreign influence, but to her internal security : that it was evident that the Republicans, who had now acquired the government of France, were actuated by the spirit of universal dominion, and would never rest, till by the aid of revolution in the adjoining states, they had incorporated them all with the ruling Republic : that the recent annexation of Savoy, Nice, and Flanders, with the French territory, gave sufficient proof of this grasping disposition, and afforded due warning to the neighbouring powers to place no reliance on the professions of a state, in which no principle was fixed but that of republican ambition : that treaties were vain with a government subject to such sudden changes as the French Republic, and in which each successive party which rose to the head of affairs disregarding the faith of ancient engagements, sought only to gain a short-lived popularity by new and dazzling schemes of foreign aggression : that the Convention had already given the clearest indication of their resolution to shake themselves loose of all former obligations, by their remarkable declaration, that "Treaties made by despots could never bind the free and enlightened inhabitants of Belgium : " that in all ages republics had been the most ambitious, and the most warlike of states, in consequence of the restless and insatiable spirit which their institutions tended to nourish among the mass of the citizens, and the necessity which their rulers felt themselves under of signalizing their short-lived power by some acts calculated to dazzle the multitude : that the French Republic had already given ample proof that they were not destined to form any exception to the general rule, and if their leaders were so inclined, the suffering and ambition of the people would soon drive them into action : that history proved both that France was too powerful for Europe, when her territory was advanced to the Rhine, and that the moment her influence became predominant, it would all be directed with inveterate hostility against this country : that in this way the contest would sooner or later approach our own shores, and if so, how much better to anticipate the evil, when it might be done with comparative ease, and crush the growing Republic before it wielded the forces of Europe at its will (1).

Such were the arguments urged in the country generally on the policy of this great undertaking : those advanced in Parliament related, as is usual with debates in that assembly, less to the general policy of the measure than the immediate causes which had led to a rupture.

Arguments  
in Parlia-  
ment on the  
same sub-  
ject.

On the part of the opposition, it was contended by Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey, "that the causes of war with France were in no respect different now from what they were under the government of Louis XIV or Louis XVI. What, then, were those causes? Not an insult or aggression, but a refusal of satisfaction, when specifically demanded. What instance had ministers produced of such demand and of such refusal? It may be admitted that the decree of November 19th entitled this country to require an explanation; but even of this they could not show that any clear and specific explanation had been demanded. Security that the French would not act upon that decree was, indeed, mentioned in one of Lord Grenville's letters, but what kind of security was neither specified, nor even named. The same might be said with respect to the opening of the Scheldt, and their conquest of Brabant. We complained of an attack on the rights of our ally;

(1) Parl. Hist. xxx, p. 79—128, Annual Register, 1793, p. 15.

we remonstrated against an accession of territory, alarming to Europe, but we proposed nothing that would be admitted as satisfaction for the injury; we pointed out nothing that would remove our alarm. The same argument applied to their conquest of Savoy from the King of Sardinia, with whom, in his opinion, they were at war as much as with the Emperor. Would it be said, that it was our business only to complain, and theirs to propose satisfaction? Common sense would see that this was too much for one independent power to expect of another. By what clue could they discover that which would satisfy those who did not choose to tell with what they would be satisfied? How could they judge of the too little, or the too much? And was it not natural for them to suppose that complaints, for which nothing was stated as adequate satisfaction, there was no disposition to withdraw? Yet on this the whole question of aggression hinged; for that the refusal of satisfaction, and not the insult, was the justifiable cause of war, was not merely his opinion, but the opinion of all the writers on the law of nations, and how could that be said to have been refused, which was never asked? Of the death of the King, none could ever speak but with grief and detestation. But was the expression of our sorrow all? Was not the atrocious event made the subject of a message from his Majesty to both Houses of Parliament? And now they would ask the few more candid men who owned that they thought this event alone a sufficient cause of war, what end could be gained by farther negotiation with Chauvelin, with Marat, or Dumouriez? Did ministers mean to barter the blood of this ill-fated monarch for any of the points in dispute; to say that the evacuation of Brabant shall atone for so much, the evacuation of Savoy for so much more? Of this they would accuse no man; but on their principle, when the crime was committed negotiation must cease. It might be admitted, however, with the right honourable gentleman, that this crime was no cause of war; but if it were admitted to be so, it was surely not decent that the subject of war should never be even mentioned without reverting to the death of the King. When the attack on France was called the cause of kings, it was not only a very witty, but a sufficient reply, that opposing it might be called the cause of subjects. It is fortunate that the public abhorrence of a war on such a motive was so great that the right honourable gentleman felt himself called upon to disclaim it at great length. But how had ministers acted? They had taken advantage of the folly of the French; they had negotiated without proposing specific terms, and then broken off the negotiation. At home they had alarmed the people that their own constitution was in danger, and they had made use of a melancholy event, which, however it might affect us as men, did not concern us a nation, to inflame our passions and impel us to war; and now that we were at war, they durst not avow the causes of it, nor tell us on what terms peace might have been preserved."

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Burke, that, "whatever temptations might have existed to this country from ancient enmity and rivalry, paltry motives indeed! or whatever opportunity might have been afforded by the tumultuous and distracted state of France, or whatever sentiments might be excited by the transactions which had taken place in that nation, his Majesty had uniformly abstained from all interference in its internal government, and had maintained, with respect to it, on every occasion, the strictest and most inviolable neutrality. Such being his conduct towards France, he had a right to expect on their part a suitable return; more especially as this return had been expressly conditioned for by a compact,

into which they entered, and by which they engaged to respect the rights of his Majesty and his allies, not to interfere in the government of any neutral country, and not to pursue any system of aggrandizement, or make any additions to their dominions, but confine themselves at the conclusion of the war within their own territories. These conditions they had all grossly violated, and had adopted a system of ambitious and destructive policy, fatal to the peace and security of every government, and which, in its consequences, had shaken Europe itself to its foundations. Their decree of the 19th of November, which had been so much talked of, offering fraternity and alliance to all people who wish to recover their liberty, was a decree not levelled against particular nations, but against every country where there was any form of government established; a decree not hostile to individuals, but to the human race; which was calculated every where to sow the seeds of rebellion and civil contention, and to spread war from one end of Europe to the other, from one end of the globe to the other. While they were bound to this country by these engagements, they had showed no intention to exempt it from the consequences of this decree. Not only had they showed no inclination to fulfil their engagements, but they had even put it out of their own power, by taking the first opportunity to make additions to their territory, in contradiction to their own express stipulations. By express resolutions for the destruction of the existing government of all invaded countries, by the means of Jacobin societies, by orders given to their generals, by the whole system adopted in this respect by the National Assembly, and by the actual connection of the whole country of Savoy, they had marked their determination to add to the dominions of France, and to provide means, through the medium of every new conquest, to carry their principles over Europe. Their conduct was such, as in every instance had militated against the dearest and most valuable interests of this country. The catastrophe of the French Monarch they ought all to feel deeply; and, consistently with that impression, be led more firmly to resist those principles from which an event of so black and atrocious a nature had proceeded; principles which, if not opposed, might be expected in their progress to lead to the commission of similar crimes; but, notwithstanding government had been obliged to decline all communication which tended to acknowledge the authority of the Convention, still they had left open the means of accommodation, nor could that line of conduct which they had pursued be stated as affording any ground of hostility."

The event has at length enabled the historian to decide which of these views is the most reasonable; for we know the evil we have incurred, and we can figure the peril we have escaped, by engaging in the contest. In truth, the arguments urged by government were not the only motives for commencing the war; the danger they apprehended lay nearer home than the conquests of the republicans; it was not foreign subjugation, so much as domestic revolution, which was dreaded, if a pacific intercourse were any longer maintained with France.

Real motives "Croyez-moi," said the Empress Catherine to Ségur, in 1789, for the War. "une guerre seule peut changer la direction des esprits en France, les réunir, donner un but plus utile aux passions, et réveiller le vrai patriotisme (1)." In this observation is contained the true secret, and the best vindication of the revolutionary war. The passions were excited; democratic

(1) Ségur, iii. 242.



ambition was awakened; the desire of power, under the name of reform, was rapidly gaining ground among the middling ranks, and the institutions of the country threatened with an overthrow, as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. In these circumstances, the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British people (1).

When passion, whether in the political body or in the individual, is once roused, it is in vain, during the paroxysm, to combat it with the weapons of reason. A man in love is proverbially inaccessible to argument, and a nation heated in the pursuit of political power is as incapable of listening to the deductions of the understanding. The only way in such times of averting the evil, is by presenting some new object of pursuit, which is not only attractive to the thinking few, but to the unthinking many; by counteracting one passion by the growth of another, and summoning to the support of truth not only the armour of reason, but the fire of imagination.

Great as has been the burden, enormous the waste, prodigal the expenditure of the war, the evils thence arising are trifling in comparison of what would have ensued had a Revolution taken place. Such an event, its advocates themselves confess, can only benefit future generations by the destruction of the present (2); its horrors, in a country such as England, where three-fourths of the whole population depend upon the wages of labour, and would be directly deprived of bread by the destruction of capital, would have exceeded any thing yet experienced in modern times.

Another question, which strongly agitated the English people at this juncture, was that of reform in Parliament.

Debate in  
Parliament  
on Parlia-  
mentary  
Reform. In the House of Commons, it was argued by Mr. Grey and Mr. Erskine, "That the state of the national representation, especially in Scotland and Cornwall, was so unequal, that no rational argument could be advanced in support of it: that a majority of the House of Commons was returned by less than fifteen thousand electors, which is not more than a two-hundredth part of the male adults of the kingdom: that this franchise, limited as it is, legally recurs only once in seven years: that the total representation for Scotland was only one greater than that for Cornwall alone: that seventy members were returned by thirty-five places where the right of voting was vested in burgage or similar tenures, and the elections were notoriously a matter of mere form: that ninety more are chosen by forty-six places, where the right of voting is confined to less than fifty persons each: thirty-seven by nineteen places, in which the number of voters is under one hundred; fifty-two by twenty-six places, in none of which the voters exceed two hundred: thirty in Scotland, by counties having less than two hundred and fifty votes; and fifteen by Scotch boroughs not containing one hundred and twenty-five each. That in this way two hundred and ninety-four members, a majority of the House of Commons, are chosen by a nominal and fictitious system, under which the people have hardly any choice in their election.

"In addition to this, the elective franchise is so various, complicated, and grotesque, that endless litigation and confusion arise from its practical operation. Religious opinions create an incapacity to vote in all Papists, and in

(1) Annual Register, 1793, p. 172.

(2) Ségur, iii. 254.

thirty boroughs Protestant dissenters are, by the Test and Corporation laws, excluded from the franchise; copyholders, how wealthy soever, are universally excluded; and from the recent returns, it appears that no less than 939,000 householders in England alone had no voice in the representation. In Scotland, matters are still worse, the great mass of the people being altogether excluded from any voice in the legislature, and the members chosen by twenty-five hundred persons, great part of whom have only fictitious or parchment votes. In fine, one hundred and fifty-four powerful and wealthy individuals can determine the returns in no less than three hundred and seven seats, being a majority of the whole Commons of England (1).

“We are always told, when this question is brought forward, that the present juncture is not the proper season for bringing forward the measure. Nothing, however, can be more obvious, than that this excuse is now totally unfounded. The burst of loyalty on the breaking out of the war, of which the Government so loudly boast, demonstrates the groundless nature of any such apprehension at this time. If ever there was any danger to this country from the propagation of French principles, that danger unquestionably is at an end; for no set of men who have not actually lost their senses, would ever propose the French Revolution for a model of imitation. No argument from the present situation of France, therefore, can be drawn against the adoption of a rational reform in this country.

“The greatest statesmen whom this country has ever produced have advocated the cause which we now bring forward. It had been supported by Mr. Locke, Sir William Blackstone, Sir George Saville, and the present Chief Baron and Chief Justice. It had been supported by Mr. Pitt himself; by the Duke of Richmond; and by an authority greater than either, that of the King himself, in his speech, 24th May 1784, wherein his Majesty says, ‘that he should ever be ready to concur in supporting, in their just balance, the rights and privileges of every branch of the Legislature.’

“The present state of the representation is so monstrous, that it could not, on general principles, be supported by any rational man. Who can defend a system which enables one English county to send as many members as the whole kingdom of Scotland? and allows representatives to be sent from many places where hardly a house now remains? If there was any one principle more strongly inculcated than another at the Revolution, it was, that the election of the House of Commons should be free. One of the grounds assigned at that period for the dethronement of James was, that he had violated the freedom of election; another, that a man ought not to be governed by laws, in the framing of which he had not a voice, or to pay taxes to which he had not consented in the same way. Is not the present state of things a direct departure from both these principles? At the Revolution, too, the necessity of short Parliaments was asserted; and is not the theory and practice of the constitution now a direct infringement on these principles? Can there be a more complete mockery than the system of representation in Scotland, where a nobleman’s steward goes down to a borough with ten or twelve pieces of parchment in his hand, and, having assembled round a table ten or twelve of his master’s dependents, secures the return. Mr. Pitt had brought forward a motion for an addition of one hundred to the county members; and in the commencement of every session,

(1) Parl. Hist. xxx. 789, 796.

it is entered on the journals of the House, that it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of England for any Lord of Parliament, or Lord Lieutenant, to concern themselves in the election of members for Parliament.' Better far at once to repeal such resolutions, and openly proclaim our servility, than allow them to remain there, when the practice was so totally at variance with them (1)."

To this it was replied by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Jenkinson,—“The liberty of a country depends on its government, and very little experience must be sufficient to demonstrate that different countries require different institutions. The real test of their practical influence is to be found in their effects. Judging by this standard, what opinion must we form of the British constitution? Is not property secured? Is not the administration of justice pure? Have we not arrived at a pitch of prosperity under it, unparalleled in any other age or country? And what have been the fruits of the speculations of those who, disregarding the lessons of experience, have aimed at the establishment of institutions framed with a view to theoretical perfection? The turbulent faction and unsettled despotism of democracy. The spots of the sun do not diminish his splendour. In considering the merits of the constitution, its working upon the whole is to be considered: the question is not, whether certain parts of it, if they stood alone, are defensible, but whether the whole machine is not admirable: not whether defects exist, but whether experience has not proved that these defects so far counteract each other, as to render it to the last degree perilous to interfere with the venerable fabric.

“I myself,” said Mr. Pitt, “once brought forward a motion for reform, and I am desirous of stating the reasons which induce me now to oppose it. I did so during a period of profound peace, when no speck appeared in the political horizon, and when the opportunity appeared favourable for amending our institutions, with a view to their preservation. Now the case is totally different. The French Revolution has entirely changed, not only the expedience of such a change, but the class of men by whom, and the objects for which, it is supported. Since that great convulsion arose, I have observed arising in this country a small, but not contemptible party, whose object is very different from moderate reform: who aspire to nothing less than to introduce the French principles with all their horrors. In such circumstances, all the practical good to be expected from reform has disappeared, and the dangers to be apprehended from the adoption of any considerable change have augmented tenfold. Upon this ground, even had I rated as high as ever the advantages of reform, I would rather have abandoned my project than incurred such a danger. It is evident now, that the question is not, whether a moderate reform is to be conceded, but admission is to be afforded to the point of the wedge, which, when driven home, will rend asunder and dissolve the empire.

“From whom do the petitions for reform now come? Is it from the friends of the British constitution; from those whose character and principles warrant the belief, that their object is to renovate, not destroy our institutions? No; they all come from the societies affiliated in this country for the purpose of spreading the Jacobin principles; from the avowed and ardent admirers of the French Republic; from the correspondents and imitators of the National Assembly; from men in whom all the horrors which they have en-

(1) Parl. Hist. xxx. 799, 807.

gendered, and all the blood they have caused to flow, cannot awaken any distrust of their principles. We must be blind, indeed, if we do not perceive what is the real object of innovation supported by such a party. In France, at the same time, they invariably mention Parliamentary reform as the medium by which all their revolutionary projects are to be forwarded in this country; and a change in our representation, as but a step to the formation of a British convention, and the total destruction of all our civil and religious institutions.

"Is it, then, to a party small in number, but dangerous from character, that we are to concede the first step on the ladder of innovation? Are we to disregard entirely the immense majority of loyal citizens, who are too sensible of the blessings they enjoy, to risk them by such a change? What is the question really at issue? It is not whether the constituencies of Cornwall and Scotland are really such as ideal perfection would approve: it is the same which is now at issue with the whole of Europe, who are contending for the cause of order, justice, humanity, and religion, in opposition to anarchy, injustice, cruelty, and infidelity. Are we at such a moment, in order to please a few individuals, to incur perils such as these? This would, indeed, resemble the conduct of those who, at the moment when the citadel was besieged, should proceed to the discussion of points of difference, instead of providing the means of defence.

"I see no probability at this time of a temperate reform: I see no guarantee for it either in the temper of the times, or the character, habits, or views of those by whom it is supported. So far from satisfying them, it would only produce a craving for farther concessions: they desire not the reform which they now advocate for itself, but as a stepping-stone to ulterior objects which they dare not avow, till their power of carrying them into effect is by this first acquisition secured. Knowing what these ulterior objects are: seeing the unspeakable horrors which it has introduced in that country where they have been carried into full effect, it is our duty to resist to the uttermost the first steps in the progress. The government which acts otherwise ceases to be a government; it unties the bands which knit together society; it forfeits the reverence and obedience of its subjects: it gives up those whom it ought to protect to the daggers of the Marseillaise, and the assassins of Paris. The government of the multitude, to which reform is but a step, is not the ruling of the few by the many, but the many by the few (1): with this difference, that the few at the head of affairs in such a state, are the most ambitious, reckless, and worthless of the community (2)."

(1) Parl. Hist. xxx. 808, 902.

(2) It is curious on a subject of such vital importance to England as Parliamentary Reform, to contrast these arguments with those urged for and against the same measure in the memorable discussions of 1830 and 1831. A summary of these is here subjoined; taken from the masterly speeches of Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Croker, Lord Lyndhurst, Mr. Stanley, and Lord Advocate Jeffrey, as an instructive proof of the progress of the human mind during the intervening period.

Parliamentary Reform. On the popular side, it was urged that the British constitution had gradually departed from the principles by which it was originally established, and on which alone stability could be expected for it in future: that by the

decline of the population in some boroughs, and the vast increase of inhabitants in once rural districts, a large proportion of the members of the House of Commons had come to be returned by a few great families, while the great majority of the people were totally unrepresented: that such a state of things was an insupportable grievance to the bulk of the citizens, and could not fail, while it continued, to nourish a perpetual discord between the holders of political influence and all the other classes of society: that an oligarchy, at all times an invidious form of government, was peculiarly so at the present time, when the public mind was inflamed by the extension of the elective suffrage to the whole citizens in France: that, by admitting a larger number into a share of political rights, the foundations of government would be laid on a

It is rejected  
by the  
House of  
Commons.

Fortunately for England, and for the cause of freedom throughout the world, these arguments prevailed in the House of Commons. The motion for reform brought forward by Lord Grey, was negatived by a majority of 282 to 41. The threats of revolution immediately subsided; the threatened convulsions disappeared; and a measure, which it was confidently predicted, would for ever alienate the higher from the lower orders, was succeeded by a degree of unanimity between them, in the most difficult times, such as had never before been witnessed in the British em-

broader basis, and a phalanx secured, who would at all times resist the extension of their privileges to a lower class, and be found the firmest supporters of social order: that it was altogether chimerical to suppose, that there could be the slightest danger in extending the elective suffrage to a numerous body of voters, as the people were so habituated to political rights, and so enlightened by education, that they were as capable of exercising such franchises as their superiors: that unless political institutions were enlarged with the increase of those who shared their protection, they would be outgrown by the multitude, and burst from the expansive force of intelligence and numbers: that the true and legitimate influence of property could never be extinguished, and would only receive a wider sphere for its exertions, by the increase of the circle to which the franchise was extended: that all Revolutions had been occasioned by the obstinate adherence to old institutions, at a time when the state of society required their alteration: that timely concession was the only way to prevent convulsion, and in the present excited state of the public mind, if it was any longer delayed, the barriers of authority would be broken, and all the horrors of the French Revolution brought upon the state.

Arguments On the other hand, it was contended against it. by the aristocratic party, that the present was not a motion for the reform of a real grievance, which was at all times entitled to the most serious attention, but for an increase of political power by the lower orders, which was to be conceded or resisted, according to its obvious tendency to preserve or subvert the balance of the constitution: that it was totally different from Mr. Pitt's previous proposals of reform, which went to remove an admitted evil in a period of tranquillity; whereas the present motion was founded on a concession to French principles, and democratic ambition, at a time of unexampled excitement: that it was evident that the popular party was already sufficiently strong, from the tenor of the acts which had been passed since the Revolution, which went rather to enlarge than abridge the liberty of the subject: that any farther concession, therefore, would necessarily have the effect of overloading the balance on the popular side, and endangering the monarchical institutions of the state: that it was in vain to refer to early times for a precedent in support of a farther extension of the elective franchise, since the state of society was then essentially different from what it now is: that the power of the sword was then vested in the feudal barons, and the country was overspread with their armed retainers: whereas now, the progress of wealth, and the invention of fire-arms, had destroyed this formidable power, while the increase of manufactures had augmented to a very great degree the power of the middling ranks, and the diffusion of knowledge had increased tenfold their practical influence: that it might be quite safe to require representatives from all the boroughs, when the commons were a humble class in the state, and began their petitions with the words, "For God's sake, and as an act of mercy,"

while it would be highly dangerous to adopt a similar course, when the numbers of that class exceeded that of the agriculturists, and their wealth overbalanced that of all the other orders in the state: that the example of the Long Parliament sufficiently demonstrated that concession to popular clamours only led to fresh demands; and conducted, by an irresistible progress, to anarchy and revolution: that the fatal consequences which had recently attended the duplication of the *Tiers-Etat*, the parliamentary reform of France, was a signal example of the effects of that concession to democratic ambition, which was now so loudly called for: that the King had there yielded up all the prerogatives of his crown, and the nobles had made a voluntary surrender of their whole titles, rights, and privileges, and the consequence was, that the commons became irresistible, and the one was brought to an ignominious death, and the other rewarded by exile, confiscation, and the scaffold: that the rotten boroughs, so much the object of invective, were, in truth, the most important part of the British Constitution, and which alone had, contrary to all former experience, so long maintained the balance of the three estates, because they gave a direct influence to property in the Legislature, and enabled the increasing wealth of the aristocracy to maintain its ground against the growing influence of the commons: that an inlet was thus provided to Parliament for men of talent, which had proved the means of introduction to our greatest statesmen, and which, if closed, would degrade its character, and convert the representatives of the people into the mere supporters of separate interests: that it was in vain to expect, in the present period of excitement, and with the example of successful revolt in France, that wealth could permanently influence the lower orders, or maintain its ground, if deprived of this constitutional channel in the House of Commons: that reform, therefore, would necessarily lead to revolution; and what revolution led to, need not be told to those who had witnessed the Reign of Terror: that the hope of attaching a large portion of the lower orders, by the extension of the elective franchise, however specious in theory, would prove fallacious in practice, because they would soon find that their votes, from their great multiplication, were of no value: that they had been deceived by the name of a privilege of no real service, and that the only way to obtain any practical benefit from their exertions, was to league with the inferior classes for a general spoliation of the higher: that this was the natural tendency of the lower orders in all wealthy states, because union with the higher afforded no immediate advantages, whereas a league with the lower gave the prospect of a division of property, and liberation from burdens, and was, in an especial manner, to be apprehended in Britain at this time, both because the public burdens were so excessive, property so unequally divided, and the example of a successful division of estates in France so recent: that a reform in Parliament, unlike all other ameliorations, was to the last degree dangerous, because it was the

pire (1). And thus, at the very time that the French nobility, by yielding to the demand for concession, and surrendering all their privileges, brought on the Revolution in that country, the British aristocracy, by steadily resisting innovation, prevented it in theirs: a memorable example to succeeding ages, of the effect of firmness and decision on the part of Parliament in stilling the violence of popular agitation, and checking the growth of democratic ambition; and a proof how different the clamour of the press, of public meetings, and popular orators, is from the sober judgment of the British people.

Bill against  
Correspon-  
dence with  
France, and  
Prosecu-  
tions for Se-  
dition and  
Treason.

As the agitation of the Jacobin Clubs, however, still continued, and societies, in imitation of the Parent Institution in Paris, were rapidly forming in all the great towns of the kingdom, a bill against correspondence with France was passed by Parliament, notwithstanding the utmost resistance by the opposition, and prosecutions commenced both in Scotland and England against the most violent of the demagogues. Some of them were clearly necessary; the expedience of others, especially in Scotland, was more than doubtful. Those vindictive measures on the part of government are seldom really beneficial, which excite the sympathy of the humane as well as the turbulent, and convert the transient ebullition of popular feeling into the lasting bitterness of political hatred (2). The true course in periods of public excitement, is firmness without severity; decided resistance to needless innovation, but cautious abstinence from individual oppression.

Prepara-  
tions for  
War, by  
Great-Bri-  
tain and the  
Allies.  
20th April  
1793.

The internal tranquillity of the British empire being thus provided for, the government took the most vigorous measures which the limited extent of their military resources would permit, to strengthen the grand army on the Continent. A corps, consisting of 20,000 English, was embarked, and landed in Holland, under the command of the Duke of York, and being united to 10,000 Hanoverians and Hessians, formed a total of 30,000 men in the British pay. The French Convention, early in the year, had ordered a levy of

voluntary surrender of legislative power to the lower orders, which could never be recovered, and a false step once taken, was irretrievable: that, supposing there were some defects in the constitution indefensible in theory, it could not be disputed that, in practice, it had proved the best protection to the rights and interests of all classes that had ever existed in the world; that, least of all, could the manufacturing or commercial bodies complain that their interests were not duly attended to in Parliament, since the whole policy of the State, for above a century, had been directed, perhaps too exclusively, to their advantage: that the representation which the great colonial, commercial, and shipping interests, now obtained by means of the purchase of close boroughs, would be annihilated if this mode of entering Parliament were closed; that thus, the real effect of reform would be to vest the supreme power in the mob of England, to the exclusion of all the great and varied interests which had risen up over the whole globe in the British dependencies: that such a state of things had proved fatal to all former republics, and could not fail speedily to lead to the dismemberment of the British empire: that if corruption were the evil that was really apprehended, no mode of increasing it could be so effectual as diminishing the close, where it existed from the paucity of inhabitants on the smallest, and increasing the middling boroughs, where experience had proved bribery was practised on the

most extensive scale: that any reform would thus diminish the private to increase the venal boroughs: that, as it was evident wealth could maintain its ground in the contest with numbers only, by means of the expenditure of money, it was incomparably better that this necessary influence should be exerted in the decent retirement of antiquated boroughs, than in the shameless prostitution of great cities: that the danger of revolution so strongly urged on the other side, in fact only existed if the reform measure was carried, inasmuch as history demonstrated, that no convulsions had ever shaken the English monarchy, but those which emanated from the House of Commons: that it was rash measures of legislation which were alone to be dreaded; and words spoken from authority, that set the world on fire: that the Constitution had now, by accident, or more probably by the Providence of God, become adapted to the curious and complicated interests of the British Empire, and had enjoyed a degree of stability unknown to free institutions in any former age, and, therefore, nothing could be more rash or culpable than to run the risk of destroying so venerable a fabric, under which so much practical benefit had been experienced, in the pursuit of imaginary, and hitherto unattainable perfection.

(1) Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 153—165. Parl. Hist. xxx. p. 787, 923—925.

(2) Parl. Debates, xxx. p. 615, 620.

300,000 men; but these troops could not come into action till April. The present forces of the Allies consisted of 365,000 men (1), acting on the whole circumference of France, from Calais to Bayonne, while those of the Republicans amounted to 270,000, for the most part of inferior quality, but possessing the advantages of unity of language, government, and public feeling, besides the important circumstance of acting in an interior and concentric circle, which enabled one corps rapidly to communicate with, and support another, while the troops of the Allies, scattered over a much larger circumference, were deprived of that advantage (2).

Effect of  
the death of  
Louis at St.-  
Petersburg.

The impression made at St.-Petersburg by the execution of Louis was fully as vivid as at London: already it was evident that those two capitals were the centres of the great contest which was approaching. No sooner did the melancholy intelligence reach the Empress Catherine, than she instantly took the most decisive measures: all Frenchmen were ordered to quit her territories within three weeks, if they did not renounce the principles of the Revolution, and all correspondence with their relations in that country: and it was publicly announced, that the great fleet of Cronstadt, with forty thousand men on board, should, early in spring, unite itself to the British navy, to pursue measures in common against the enemies of humanity (3).

Treaty be-  
tween Eng-  
land and  
Russia.

The efforts of the Czarine had been incessant and energetic to organize an alliance capable of restraining the progress of revolutionary principles: with that view she had restrained the uplifted arm of conquest over Gustavus III of Sweden in 1790; and hardly were her troops disengaged from their Turkish enemies, on the banks of the Danube, by the peace of Jassy in 1792, than she made arrangements for transporting the Moscovite legions to the heart of Germany. Nor did these energetic resolutions evaporate in mere empty words, on the part either of the cabinet of St.-Petersburg or St.-James. An intimate and confidential correspondence immediately commenced between Count Woronzoff, the Russian ambassador at London, and Lord Grenville, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which terminated in a treaty between the two powers, signed in London on the 25th March. By this convention, which laid the basis of the grand alliance which afterwards brought the war to a glorious termination, it was provided that the two powers should "employ their respective forces, as far as circumstances shall permit, in carrying on the just and necessary war in which they find themselves engaged against France; and they reciprocally

(1) Jom. vi. 49, 52.

(2) The relative strength of the forces on opposite sides in July 1793, was as follows:—

#### ALLIES.

Imperialists in Belgium, . . . . .	50,000
Austrians on the Rhine, . . . . .	40,000
On the Meuse, . . . . .	33,000
Prussians in Belgium, . . . . .	12,000
Prussians and Saxons on the Rhine, . . . . .	65,000
Dutch, . . . . .	20,000
English, Hanoverians, and Hessians, . . . . .	30,000
Austrians and Piedmontese, in Piedmont, . . . . .	45,000
Spaniards . . . . .	50,000
Forces of the Empire and Emigrants, . . . . .	20,000
<b>Total, . . . . .</b>	<b>365,000</b>

#### FRENCH.

In Belgium and Holland, . . . . .	30,000
Before Maestricht and in the Limbourg, . . . . .	70,000
On the Moselle, . . . . .	25,000
At Mayence, . . . . .	45,000
On the Upper-Rhine, . . . . .	30,000
In Savoy and Nice, . . . . .	40,000
In the Interior, . . . . .	30,000
<b>Total, . . . . .</b>	<b>270,000</b>

The French, however, had the superiority in the field till the end of April; from that time till the end of August, the Allies had the advantage; after which, from the great levies of the Republicans coming forward, they resumed the ascendancy, which went on continually increasing till the close of the campaign, and was never lost till the memorable campaign of 1799.—JOMINI, iii, 51, 52, 53.

(3) Hard. ii. 191, 192.

engage not to lay down their arms without restitution of all the conquests, which France may have made upon either of the respective powers, or upon such other states or allies to whom, by common consent, they shall extend the benefit of this treaty." They agreed, also, to shut their ports against France, and not permit the export of any naval stores to that power, "and to unite all their efforts to prevent other powers not implicated in this war from giving, on this occasion of common concern to every civilized state, any protection whatever, in consequence of their neutrality, to the commerce or property of the French, on the sea, or in the ports of France." The existing commercial treaties were, at the same time, by a separate convention, ratified and confirmed between the two powers (1).

25th April 1793. Shortly after, a similar convention was entered into between Great-Britain and Sardinia, by which the former power was to advance an annual subsidy of L. 200,000 a-year during the whole continuance of the war, and the latter to keep on foot an army of fifty thousand men; and the English government engaged to procure for it entire restitution of its dominions as they stood at the commencement of the war; and, by another convention, signed at Aranjuez on the 25th of May, they engaged not to make peace till they had obtained full restitution for the Spaniards "of all places, towns, and territories which belonged to them at the commencement of the war, and which the enemy 12th July. may have taken during its continuance." A similar convention was concluded with the court of the two Sicilies, and with Prussia, in 14th July. which the clauses, prohibiting all exportation to France, and preventing the trade of neutrals with it, are the same as in the Russian treaty. Treaties of the same tenor were concluded in the course of the summer 30th August 1793. with the Emperor of Germany and the King of Portugal. Thus was all Europe arrayed in a great league against Republican France, 26th Sept. and thus did the regicides of that country, as the first fruits of their cruel triumph, find themselves excluded from the pale of civilized nations. It will appear in the sequel, how many, and what unheard of disasters broke up this great confederacy: how courageous some were in adhering to their engagements: how weak and dastardly others were in deserting them; and how firmly and nobly Great-Britain alone persevered to the end, and never laid down her arms till she had accomplished all the objects of the war, and fulfilled to the very letter all the obligations she had contracted to any even the humblest of the allied powers (2).

Secret designs of Russia. But while all Europe thus resounded with the note of military preparation against France, Russia had other and more interested designs in view. Amidst the general consternation at the triumphs of the French republicans, Catherine conceived that she would be permitted to pursue, without molestation, her ambitious designs against Poland. She constantly represented the disturbances in that kingdom as the fruit of revolutionary propagandism, which it was indispensable to crush in the first instance; and it was easy to see that it was for the banks of the Vistula, not the Seine, that her military preparations were, in the first instance at least, directed. The ambitious views of Prussia were also, as will fully appear in the sequel, strongly turned in the same direction; and thus in the very outset of a war which required the concentrated effort of all Europe, and might by such an

(1) Parl. Hist. xxx. 1032, and Hard. ii. 198.

(2) Parl. Hist. xxx. 1032, 1034, 1048, 1058.



effort have been speedily brought to a successful termination, were the principal powers already distracted by separate interests, and unjustifiable projects of individual aggrandizement (1).

Nor was it only the ambitious projects of Russia and Prussia against the independence of Poland, which already gave a gloomy augury as to the issue of the war. Its issue was more immediately affected by the jealousy of Austria and Prussia, which now broke out in the most undisguised manner, and occasioned such a division of the allied forces, as effectually prevented any cordial or effective co-operation existing between them. The Prussian cabinet, mortified at the lead which the Imperial generals took in the common operations, insisted upon the formation of two independent German armies; one composed of Prussians, the other of Austrians, to which the forces of all the minor states should be joined: those of Saxony, Hanover, and Hesse being grouped round the standards of Prussia; those of Bavaria, Wirtemberg, Swabia, the Palatinate, and Franconia, following the double-headed eagles of Austria. By this means, all unity of action between the two grand allied armies was broken up at the very time when it was most required, to meet the desperate and concentrated energy of a revolutionary state; while the zeal of all the minor states was irretrievably cooled at finding themselves thus parcelled out between the two great military powers, whose pre-eminence already gave them so much disquietude, and compelled against their will to serve under the standards of empires from whom many of them apprehended greater danger than from the common enemy (2).

Wretched state of the French. But though such seeds of weakness existed among the allied powers, the immediate danger was to all appearance much greater to France. Though their armies in Flanders were, in the commencement of the campaign, superior to those of the Allies, they were in the most deplorable state of insubordination, and miserably deficient in every species of equipment. The artillery horses had in great part perished during the severity of a winter campaign; the clothing of the soldiers was worn out; their spirit had disappeared during the license of Republican conquest. The disorganization was complete in every department; the artillery stores, the commissariat, the cavalry horses, were deficient; discipline was wanting among the soldiers, concord among the chiefs. France then experienced the weakness arising from Revolutionary license; she regained her strength under the stern despotism of the Reign of Terror (3).

Prince Cobourg Generalissimo. Prince Cobourg was appointed generalissimo of the Allied Armies from the Rhine to the German Ocean. The great abilities displayed by Clairfait in repairing the disasters of the preceding campaign, pleaded in vain for his continuance in the command at a court not yet taught by disaster to disregard influence and promote only merit. His successor had served under the Imperial banners against the Turks, and shared in the glories of the campaigns of Suwarrow. But the Austrian commander was far from possessing the vigour or capacity of the conqueror of Ismael. Adhering with obstinate perseverance to the system of dividing his forces, and covering an immense tract of country with communications, he frittered away the vast army placed at his disposal, and permitted the fairest opportunity ever offered, of striking a decisive blow against the rising Republic, to pass away without

(1) Hard. ii. 198, 199.

(2) Hard. ii. 200, 202.

(3) Toul. iii. 239. Jomini, iii. 49, 52.

any important event (1). He belonged to the old methodical school of Lacey; was destitute of either decision or character; and, from the tardiness of his operations, was the general of all others least qualified to combat the fire and energy of a Revolution.

Vast efforts of France. To support the prodigious expense of a war on all their frontiers, and on so great a scale, would greatly have exceeded the ordinary and legitimate resources of the French government. But, contrary alike to precedent and anticipation, they derived from the miseries and convulsions of the Revolution the means of new and unparalleled resources. The expenditure of 1792, covered by taxes, the sale of ecclesiastical property and patriotic gifts, amounted to 958,000,000 francs, or about L.40,000,000 sterling; but the expense of the last period of the year was at the rate of 200,000,000 francs; or L.8,000,000 a month. But the period was now arrived when all calculation in matters of finance was to cease; for all exigencies, the inexhaustible mine of assignats, possessing a forced circulation, and issued on the credit of the national domains, proved sufficient. When any want was felt in the treasury, the demands were paid by a fresh issue of paper; and this fictitious currency, the source of boundless private ruin in France, sustained singly, during the first years of the Revolutionary wars, the public credit. In his Finance Report for 1793, Chambon declared that the expenses of that year could admit of no exact calculation; but that the nation must rise superior to its financial, as it had already risen above its military difficulties; and therefore he proposed the immediate issue of 800,000,000 francs, or upwards of L.33,000,000 in assignats, on the security of the national domains, which was immediately agreed to. These domains he valued at eight milliards, or about L.350,000,000 sterling; of which three milliards, or L.150,000,000, had been consumed or impledged by previous issues—an extraordinary proof of the length to which the confiscation of private property had already been carried under the Revolutionary Government (2).

To meet the exigencies of the year in the British Parliament, Mr. Pitt proposed a loan of L.4,500,000, besides the ordinary supplies of the year, the interest of which was provided for by additional taxes; and subsidies were granted to the King of Sardinia, and several of the smaller German powers. At the same time an issue of L.5,000,000 was voted to relieve the commercial embarrassment consequent on the breaking out of the war; and such was the effect of this well-timed supply, that credit was speedily restored, and little, if any, of this large sum ultimately lost to the state (3),—a striking example of the beneficial effect of liberal support by government, even in the darkest periods of public suffering.

Designs of Dumouriez; In January 1793, Dumouriez came to Paris, in order to endeavour to rouse the Girondist party to save the life of Louis. This movement, while it failed in its object of preserving the King, for ever alienated the Jacobins from the general (4). The consequences of this misunderstanding were important upon the future fate of the Campaign.

Dumouriez's plan, which he had been meditating during the whole winter, was to commence operations by an invasion of Holland; to revolutionize that country, unite it with the provinces of Flanders, as was since done in 1814, raise an army of eighty thousand men, and with this force move upon Paris, and, without the aid of any other power, dictate laws to the Convention, and res-

(1) Jom. iii. 62. Hard. ii. 204, 205.

(2) Toul. iii. 248, 250.

(3) Parl. Hist. xxx. 972.

(4) Jom. iii. 57. Dum. iii. 352.

tore tranquillity to France. It is one of the most extraordinary signs of those days of revolution and confusion, that so wild a project should have been seriously undertaken by a man of his acute understanding (1).

On the other hand, the project of the Allies was to drive the Republicans beyond the Meuse, and disengage the important fortress of Maestricht; next invest and regain Mentz, the key of the Rhine, and then unite their victorious forces for the deliverance of Flanders. The design, in general, was well conceived; but the details prescribed for the recovery of the Low-Countries were tainted by that division of force, which so long proved ruinous to the Allied Armies (2).

To carry into execution his project, Dumouriez, early in the season, collected a body of about twenty thousand men at Antwerp, with a

view to an attack on Rotterdam. Shortly after, his troops entered the Dutch territory, and established themselves between Breda and Bergen-op-zoom. At first his efforts were attended with unlooked-for success; after a siege of three days, and when the French were on the point of retiring for want of ammunition, Breda, with a garrison of twenty-five hundred men, capitulated. This success was speedily followed by the reduction of Gertruydenberg, after a trifling resistance; and siege was immediately laid to

Williamstadt. The French forces, encamped in straw huts on the shores of the branch of the sea called the Brisbos, were only waiting for the collection of boats, sufficient to convey across the troops in order to undertake the siege of Dort, when information was received by the General, on the night of the 8th March, of events in other quarters of Flanders, which immediately led to the abandonment of this ill-conceived enterprise (3).

While Dumouriez was absent with part of his forces in Holland, Miranda was prosecuting the siege of Maestricht, though with forces totally inadequate to so great an undertaking. But while the French were still reposing in fancied security in their cantonments, the Imperialists were taking active measures to raise the siege. Fifty-two thousand men had been assembled under Prince Cobourg, with whom was the young ARCHDUKE CHARLES at the head of the grenadiers. On the 1st and 2d March, the Austrians along the whole line, attacked the French cantonments, and after an inconsiderable resistance, succeeded in driving them back, and in many points throwing them into utter confusion. The discouragement which has so often been observed to seize the French troops on the

first considerable reverse, got possession of the soldiers; whole battalions fled in confusion into France; officers quitted their troops, soldiers disbanded from their officers; the siege of Maestricht was raised, the heavy artillery sent back in haste towards Brussels, and the army driven in disorder beyond the Meuse, with the loss of seven thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. On the 4th March, the Republicans were again routed near Liege, and a large portion of the heavy artillery abandoned under that city; a few days after, Tongres was carried by the Archduke Charles, at the head of twelve thousand men; and the whole army fell back upon Tirlemont, and thence to Louvain, where Dumouriez arrived from the Dutch frontier, and resumed the command. The Austrians then desisted from the pursuit, sa-

(1) Dum iv. 14.

(2) Jom. iii. 64.

(3) Jom. iii. 85. Toul. iii. 262. Dum. iv. 4.

tified with their first success, and not deeming themselves sufficiently strong to force the united corps of the French army in that city (1).

Great sensation produced by them in Flanders. The intelligence of these repeated disasters produced the utmost sensation in the whole of Flanders. The Republican party, already disgusted with the exaction and plunder of the French commissioners, now found themselves threatened with the immediate vengeance of their sovereign, and chastisement from the Allied forces. The decree of the Convention, uniting the Flemish provinces to the French Republic, had excited the utmost discontent in the whole country; the spoliation of the churches, forced requisitions, imprisonments, and abuses of every kind, which had gone on during the winter, had roused such a universal spirit of resistance, that a general insurrection was hourly expected, and a body of ten thousand peasants had already assembled in the neighbourhood of Ghent, and defeated the detachments of the garrison of that city which had been sent against them (2).

Efforts of Dumouriez. To endeavour to remedy these disorders, and restore the shaken attachment of the Flemings, was the first care of Dumouriez. For this purpose he had a conference at Louvain, shortly after his arrival, with Camus, and the other Commissioners of the Convention, but it ended in nothing but mutual recriminations. Dumouriez reproached them with having authorized and permitted the exactions and disorders which had caused such a ferment in the conquered provinces; and they retaliated by accusing him of entertaining designs subversive of the liberty of the people. It concluded thus: "General," said Camus, "you are accused of wishing to become Cæsar; could I feel assured of it, I would act the part of Brutus, and stab you to the heart."—"My dear Camus," replied he, "I am neither Cæsar, nor you Brutus; and the menace you have uttered, is, to me, a passport to immortality (3)."

March 13. Dumouriez found the army, which, notwithstanding the detachment of twenty thousand men in Holland, twelve thousand at Namur, and five thousand in another direction, was still forty-five thousand strong, including four thousand five hundred cavalry in the utmost state of disorganization; the confusion of defeat having been superadded to that of Republican license. He immediately reorganized it in a different manner, and, in order to restore the confidence of the soldiers, resolved to commence offensive operations. In a few days, the French advanced guard defeated the Austrians near Tirlemont, with the loss of twelve hundred men; an event which immediately restored confidence to the whole army, and confirmed the General in his resolution to risk a general action (4).

The Austrians had thirty-nine thousand men, of whom nine thousand were horse, posted near Tirlemont. Resolved not to decline a combat, they concentrated their forces along a position, about two leagues in length, near the

Battle of Nerwinde.

village of NERWINDE. The left, commanded by the Archduke Charles, was posted across the *chaussée* leading to Tirlemont; the right, under the orders of Clairfait, extended towards Landau; the centre, in two lines, was under the command of General Colloredo and the Prince of Wirtemberg. On the other hand, the French army was divided into eight columns; three of which, under Valence, were destined to attack the

(1) Toul. iii. 270. Jom. iii. 86, 94, 99. Ib. iii. 96, 99.

(2) Dum. iv. 66, 72. Toul. iii. 272.

(3) Dum. iv. 67, 72.

(4) Dum. iv. 74, 80, 81.

right; two, under the Duke of Chartres, to force the centre; and three, under Miranda, to overwhelm the left. The action began by an attack on the Austrian left, by the troops under the command of Miranda, which advanced in dense columns, and at first succeeded in carrying the villages immediately in front of their position; but the Austrians having directed a severe and concentric fire of artillery on that point, the advance of the masses was checked, and disorder and irresolution introduced into their ranks. Meanwhile, the village of Nerwinde was occupied by the Republicans in the centre, but shortly after regained by the Austrians, and after being frequently taken and retaken, it was finally evacuated by the French, who were unable to sustain the severe and incessant fire of the Imperial artillery. Dumouriez formed his line a hundred yards in rear of the village, when the Austrians immediately assailed the infantry by two columns of curassiers; but the first was repulsed by the murderous fire of grape from the French artillery; and the second checked, after a severe engagement, by the Republican cavalry.

Defeat of  
the French.

The combat now ceased on the right and centre, but on the left affairs had taken a very different turn. The French, under Miranda, there endeavoured in vain to debouche from the villages which they had occupied; the heads of their columns, as fast as they presented themselves, were swept off by the fire of the Austrian artillery, placed on the heights immediately behind; and shortly after, the Archduke Charles, at the head of two battalions, stormed the villages; and Prince Cobourg, perceiving this to be the important point, attacked the French columns, with a large body of cavalry and infantry, under the Duke of Wirtemberg, in flank, while the Archduke pressed their front. The result was, that the French right wing was routed, and would have been totally destroyed, had the Duke of Wirtemberg charged with the whole forces under his command, instead of the inconsiderable part which achieved this important success. The Republicans, however, alarmed at this disaster, retired from the field of battle, and regained, with some difficulty, the ground they had occupied before the engagement (1).

In this battle, the Austrians lost two thousand men, and the French two thousand five hundred killed and wounded, and fifteen hundred prisoners, but it decided the fate of the campaign. Dumouriez, aided by the young Duke of Chartres, conducted the retreat in the evening with much ability, and in good order, without being seriously disquieted by their enemies. A few days after the Austrians advanced, and on the 22d, under cover of a thick mist, made an unexpected attack on the French rear-guard; but they were repulsed, after a trifling success, with loss (2).

Disorgani-  
zation of  
the French  
Army.

The position of the French commander, however, was now extremely critical. To conduct a long retreat with discouraged troops, in the face of a victorious enemy, is at all times dangerous; but it was in an especial manner so at that juncture, in consequence of the undisciplined state of a large part of his forces, and the undisguised manner in which the volunteers left their colours upon the first serious reverses. The National Guards openly declared that they had taken up arms to save their country, not to get themselves massacred in Belgium; and whole companies and battalions, with their arms and baggage, went off in a body towards the French frontier. To such a height did the discouragement arrive, that within

(1) Dum. iv. 88, 90, 97. Jom. iii. 105, 111, 113. Toul. iii. 279, 288, 290.

(2) Dum. iv. 101. Jom. iii. 117, 121. Toul. iii. 292, 3.

a few days after the battle, six thousand men left their colours, and disbanded, spreading dismay over all the roads, leading to France. Naturally brave and active, the French troops are the best in the world to advance and gain conquests; but they have not, till inured by discipline and experience, the steadiness requisite to preserve them; and by the threatened defection of the volunteer corps, Dumouriez was exposed to the loss of more than half his army, while the open plains of Flanders, now destitute of fortified places, offered no points of defence capable of arresting the progress of a victorious army (1).

*Retreat of  
Dumouriez.*

Influenced by these considerations, the French General every where prepared for a retreat. Orders were despatched to General Harville, to throw a garrison of two thousand men into the citadel of Namur, and move with the remainder of his corps, consisting of twelve thousand men, towards Brussels, while the troops advanced, by the imprudent invasion of Holland, as far as Gertruydenberg and Breda, were directed to retire upon Antwerp and Mechlin. Prince Cobourg in vain urged the Dutch and Prussian troops to disquiet their retreat; contenting themselves with investing Breda and Gertruydenberg, they remained, with a force of thirty thousand men, in a state of perfect inaction (2).

*Conferences  
with Prince  
Cobourg.*

Shortly after conferences were opened between Dumouriez and the Austrian Generals, in virtue of which, it was agreed that the French should retire behind Brussels, without being disquieted in their retreat. It soon appeared how essential such an arrangement was to the March 23. Republican arms. On the following day, Clairfait, who was ignorant of the convention, attacked General Lamarche, who fell back in confusion behind Louvain, and left an opening in the retreating columns, which, with a more enterprising enemy, might have been attended with ruinous results. The troops then gave themselves up to despair, and openly threatened to disband; a striking proof of the little reliance that can be placed on any but regular and disciplined soldiers, during the vicissitudes of fortune, unavoidable in war. Dumouriez himself has confessed, that his troops were in such a state of disorder, that, if vigorously pressed, they must have been totally annihilated in the long retreat which lay before them, before they regained the French frontiers; and yet so ignorant was the Austrian commander of the condition of his adversary, that he was unaware of a state of debility, confusion, and weakness, which was notorious to every peasant who beheld his retreating column (3).

*25th and  
26th March.*

In virtue of the convention, the French army, without farther delay, evacuated Brussels, and Mechlin, and retired in good order, by Hall, Mons, and Ath, towards the French frontier. At the same time, the Republicans retired along the whole line from Gertruydenberg to Namur, and withdrew the garrison from the citadel of the latter place (4).

But it soon appeared, that in these movements Dumouriez had more than mere military objects in view. It was at Ath, on the 27th March, that the first conference of a political nature took place, and it was verbally agreed between the French commander and Colonel Mack, on the part of the Imperialists, "That the French army should repose a little at Mons and Tournay, without being disquieted, and that Dumouriez, who was to judge of the proper time

(1) Jom. iii. 125. Dum. iv. 98, 102, 103, 115.

(2) Jom. iii. 121. Dum. iv. 104, 105.

(3) Dum. iv. 109, 111. Jom. iii. 126, 127. Hard. ii. 241, 215.

(4) Toul. iii. 295.

for marching to Paris, should regulate the movements of the Austrians, who were to act only as auxiliaries, that if he could not, by his single forces, effect the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, he should fix upon the amount of the Allied Forces which he would require : and that the fortress of Condé should be placed in the hands of the Imperialists as a guarantee, to be restored to France after a general peace (1).

Failure and Flight of Dumouriez. Having thus embarked in the perilous undertaking of overturning the republican, and establishing a monarchical government, Dumouriez's first care was to secure the fortresses upon which the success of his enterprise depended. But here his ill fortune began. The officer whom he despatched to take possession of Lille, suffered himself to be made the dupe of the commander of that place, and led a prisoner into the fortress; the garrisons of Condé and Valenciennes successfully resisted his attempts to bring them over to the constitutional party; and the Convention taking the alarm, despatched Camus, and three other commissioners, with the Minister at War, Beurnonville, with orders to the General to appear at the bar of the Convention, and answer for his conduct. After an angry discussion, Dumouriez arrested the deputies, and delivered them over to the Austrians; but he was speedily deserted by his own soldiers, and obliged to fly from his camp at St.-Amand, and take refuge, with fifteen hundred followers, in the Austrian lines (2).

Restrained either by a sense of honour, arising from the recent convention or by the inherent slowness of their disposition, the Austrians made no attempt to improve the opportunity afforded by the defection of the French commander. The Republicans were permitted quietly to retire into Valenciennes, Lille, and Condé; a considerable number formed an intrenched camp at Famars, where, by orders of the Convention, General Dampierre assumed the command, and sedulously endeavoured to restore the discipline and revive the spirit which so many disasters had severely weakened among the soldiers (3).

The failure of the attempt of Dumouriez having convinced Prince Cobour that nothing was now to be made of the Republicans but by force of arms, all the efforts of the Allied Powers were at last directed to this object.

Congress at Antwerp to decide on the measures for the war. A Congress was assembled at Antwerp of the ministers of the Allied Powers, which was attended by Count Metternich (4) and Stahrenberg on the part of Austria, Lord Auckland on that of England, and Count Keller on that of Prussia. Such was the confidence inspired by recent events, that these ministers all imagined that the last days of the Convention were at hand : and in truth they were so, if they had communicated a little more vigour and unanimity into the military operations. Inspired by these ideas, and irritated at the total failure of Dumouriez's attempt to subvert the anarchical rule in that country, the plenipotentiaries came to the resolution of totally altering the object of the war, and the necessity was now openly announced of providing *indemnities and securities* for the allied powers; in other words, partitioning the frontier territories of France among the invading states. The effect of this resolution was immediately conspicuous in a proclamation which Prince Cobour issued to the French, in which he openly disavowed on the part of his government,

(1) Hard. ii. 218. Jom. iii. 132.

(2) Toul. iii. 308. Jom. iii. 135, 137.

(3) Toul. iii. 319.

(4) Father of the great statesman of the same name of the present day.

those resolutions to abstain from all aggrandizements which he had announced only a few days before, and declared that he was ordered to prosecute the contest by force of arms with all the forces at his disposal (1). The effects of this unhappy resolution were soon apparent. When Valenciennes and Condé were taken, the standard, not of Louis XVII, but of Austria, was hoisted on the walls, and the allied ministers, already talked openly of indemnities for the past, and securities for the future. No step in the early stages of the war was ever attended with more unfortunate consequences: it at once changed the character of the contest: converted it from one of liberation into one of aggrandizement, and gave the Jacobins of Paris too good reason for their assertion, that the dismemberment of the country was at hand, and that all true citizens must join heart in hand in resisting the common enemy. The true principle to have adopted would have been that so strongly recommended by Mr. Burke, and which afterwards proved so successful in the hands of Alexander and Wellington, viz. to have separated distinctly and emphatically the cause of France from that of the Jacobin faction who had enthralled it: to have guaranteed the integrity of the former, and denounced implacable hostility only against the latter, and thus afforded the means to the great body of patriotic citizens who were adverse to the sanguinary rule of the Convention, of extricating themselves at once from domestic tyranny and foreign subjugation (2).

The British contingent, twenty thousand strong, having landed at Rotterdam, the Allied Army, under his immediate command, was raised to above ninety thousand men, besides a detached corps of thirty thousand Austrians, stationed at Namur, Luxembourg, and Trèves, to keep the communication with the Prussian army destined to act against Mayence (3).

Conquest of  
Austrian  
Flanders by  
the Allies.

Alarmed at the great peril they had sustained by the defection of Dumouriez, the Convention took the most vigorous measures to provide for the public safety. A camp of forty thousand men was ordered to form a reserve for the army; the levy of 300,000 men, ordered by the decree of 24th February, was directed to be hastened, and sixty representatives of the Convention named, to serve as viceroys over the generals in all the armies. No less than twelve of these haughty Republicans were com-

(1) In his first proclamation on 5th April, composed during the conferences with Dumouriez, Cobourg declared, "Desirous only of securing the prosperity and glory of a country, torn by so many convulsions, I declare that I shall support, with all the forces at my disposal, the generous and beneficent intentions of General Dumouriez and his brave army. I declare that our only object is to restore to France its constitutional monarch, with the means of rectifying such experienced abuses as may exist, and to give to France as to Europe, peace, confidence, tranquillity, and happiness. In conformity with these principles, I declare on my word of honour, that I enter on the French territory without any intention of making conquests, but solely and entirely for the above-mentioned purposes. I declare also on my word of honour, that, if military operations should lead to any place of strength being placed in my hands, I shall regard it in no other light than as a *sacred deposit*; and I bind myself in the most solemn manner to restore it to the government which may be established in France, or as soon as the brave general with whom I make common cause shall demand it." These are the principles of the true anti-revolutionary war; but they

were strangely departed from in the proclamation issued a few days later by the same general, after the determination of the Congress at Antwerp had been taken. Prince Cobourg there said,—"The proclamation of the 5th instant was the expression only of my *personal* sentiments; and I there manifested my *individual* views for the safety and tranquillity of France. But now that the results of that declaration have proved so different from what I anticipated, the same candour obliges me to declare that the state of hostility between the Emperor and the French nation is unhappily re-established in its full extent. It remains for me, therefore, only to *revoke my said declaration*, and to announce that I shall prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. Nothing remains binding of my first proclamation, but the declaration which I renew with pleasure, that the strictest discipline shall be observed by my troops in all parts of the French territory which they may occupy." Stronger evidence of the unhappy change of systems cannot be imagined.—See Hardenberg, ii. 231, 233, 241, 243.

(2) Hard. ii. 238, 241. Burke, *Ag. Peace*.

(3) Jom. iii. 146. Tool. iv. 4.



manded to proceed to the army of the North. No limit existed to their authority; armed with the despotic powers of the Convention, supported by a Republican and mutinous soldiery, they, with equal facility, placed the generals on a triumphal car, or despatched them to the scaffold. Disposing with absolute sway of the lives and arms of several millions of Frenchmen, they were staggered by no losses, intimidated by no difficulties; to press on, and bear down opposition by the force of numbers, was the system on which they invariably acted, and disposing with an unsparing hand of the blood of a nation in arms, they found resources for the maintenance of such a murderous system of warfare, which never could have been commanded by any regular government (1).

Defeats on  
the Rhine of  
Custine's  
Projects.

While these disastrous events were occurring on the northern, fortune was not more propitious to the arms of the Republic on its eastern frontier. The forces of the French in that quarter, at the opening of the campaign, were greatly overmatched by those of the Allies; between the Prussians and Austrians, there were not less than seventy-five thousand men on the Rhine in February, besides twenty thousand between Trèves and the Meuse; while Custine had only forty-five thousand in the field, including twenty-two thousand under his immediate command, the remainder being stationed on the Meuse; and the whole forces on the Upper-Rhine, including the garrisons, did not exceed forty thousand, of whom not more than a half were available to service in the field. The campaign was

March 24.

opened after some inconsiderable actions, on the 24th March, by the King of Prussia crossing the Rhine in great force at Rheinfels. An ineffectual resistance was attempted by the army of Custine, but the superiority of the Allied Forces compelled him to fall back, and after some days' retreat, and several partial actions, he retired first to Landau, and thence behind the river Lauter, and took post in the famous lines of Weissenberg. Mentz was now left to its own resources, with a great train of heavy artillery, and a

March 31.

garrison of twenty thousand men; while Custine, whose force was augmented by the garrisons in Alsace to thirty-five thousand men, remained strictly on the defensive in the Vosges mountains and his fortified position (2).

Siege of  
Mayence.

The Allies immediately made preparations for the siege of this great fortress; but, by an inconceivable fatuity, the superb siege equipage, which was on the road from Austria, was sent on to Valenciennes, while the supplies requisite for the attack on Mayence were brought from Holland, an exchange which occasioned great delays in both sieges, and proved extremely injurious to the future progress of the Allied arms. The garrison, though so numerous, were not furnished with the whole artillery requisite for arming the extensive works; but their spirit was excellent, and the most vigorous resistance was to be anticipated. Little progress took place

May 17.

in the operations during the first two months, and on the 17th May, a general attack was made on the covering force by Custine's army, supported by fourteen thousand men from the corps of the Moselle, under

Defeat of the  
Attack on the  
Covering  
Army.

General Houchard; but the movements of the troops were ill combined, part of them were seized with a disgraceful panic, and the attack proved entirely abortive. After this failure, Custine was removed to the command of the Army of the North, now severely pressed by the Allied Forces near Valenciennes; and the forces in the lines of Weissenberg re-

(1) Jom. iii. 151.

(2) Toul. iii. 322, 325. Jom. iii. 187, 202, 205.

maintained under the orders of Beauharnais, without attempting any thing of importance till a later period of the campaign (1). The inactivity and irresolution of the Allies in these operations, and the little advantage which they derived from their superiority of force, and the wretched condition of their opponents, proves how grievously they stood in need of a leader capable of conducting such a contest.

Fall of Mayence. Meanwhile, the operations of the siege, long delayed from the tardiness in the approach of the heavy train, were at length pushed with activity. Trenches having been regularly constructed, fifteen batteries July 1. were armed on the 1st July, and a heavy fire from above two hundred pieces of cannon opened upon the body of the place, the garrison of which, after a blockade of two months, began to be severely straitened for provisions. On the 16th, a great magazine of forage took fire, and was consumed; and the destruction of several mills augmented the difficulties of the besieged, who now found their great numbers the principal difficulty with which they had to contend. A capitulation, therefore, by which the garrison should be withdrawn to some quarter where their services might be of more value to the Republic, was agreed to, and the 22d July fixed on as the day for its accomplishment (2).

While this was going on within the city, the army of Beauharnais, urged by repeated orders from the Convention, was at length taking measures for its deliverance. Early in July, the troops broke up from the lines of Weissenberg, and after a variety of tardy movements, a general attack took place on the 19th, on the whole Allied position, over an extent of nearly thirty leagues. But the efforts of the Republicans, feeble and ill conducted, led to no result, and in the midst of their complicated movements, Mayence surrendered July 22 on the 22d. The Duke of Brunswick, rejoiced at finding himself extricated by this event, from a situation which, with more daring adversaries, would have been full of peril, accorded favourable terms to the garrison; they were permitted to march out with their arms and baggage, on condition of not serving against the Allies for a year; a stipulation of ruinous consequences to the Royalist party, as it disengaged seventeen thousand veteran soldiers, who were forthwith sent against the insurgents in la Vendée (3). The Republicans, finding the city taken, fell back in disorder, and regained the lines of Weissenberg in such confusion, as indicated rather a total rout than an indecisive offensive movement (4).

Congress at Antwerp to decide on the campaign. While these events were taking place on the Rhine, the war was gradually assuming a more decisive character on the Flemish frontier. The congress having been held at Antwerp for arranging the plan of the campaign, having at length resolved upon the operations which were to be pursued, and the British contingents having joined the line at the April 25. end of April, the Archduke Charles entered in triumph into Brussels, the people of which, with the usual inconstancy of the multitude, gave him as flattering a reception as had attended the entrance of the Republic.

(1) Toul. iv. 15, 16. Jom. iii. 209, 213, 225. Hard. ii. 257, 258, 259, 298.

(2) Jom. iii. 235, 239. Hard. ii. 299, 310.

(3) Hard. ii. 296, 319. Jom. iii. 244, 252.

(4) Already it had become evident that the Prussians were secretly inclined towards the French, and that after the capture of Mayence, they would withdraw as soon as they could from the contest.

During the siege, a negotiation for the exchange of prisoners was established between "the French Republic and the King of Prussia;" and such was the temper of the officers, that when the fortress was taken, they caused the Marseillaise hymn to be sung in the hotels where they lodged.—See Hardenberg, ii. 303—319.

cans a few months before. The Allied Generals, however, were far from improving the advantages afforded by the defection of Dumouriez, and the extreme dejection of the French army; their forces were not put in motion till the beginning of May, before which the French had so far recovered from their consternation, as to have actually resumed the offensive. Disposing of a splendid army of 120,000 men, Cobourg did nothing to disquiet the retreat of thirty thousand Republicans, disordered and dejected, to their own frontiers, and allowed them by his extreme tardiness to be reinforced by numerous levies from the interior, before he attempted to follow up his successes (1).

May 7. On the 1st May, a general attack was made by General Dampierre  
Republicans forced back  
to Famars. on the Allied position; but the Republicans were driven back to their camp at Famars with the loss of two thousand men and a large

quantity of artillery. On the 8th, a more serious action took place; the French

May 8. attacked the Allies along their whole line, extending to nine leagues, with forces greatly inferior, but they were everywhere unsuccessful except at the wood of Vicogne, where the Prussians were forced back, until the arrival of the English Guards changed the face of affairs. These gallant corps drove back the French with the loss of four thousand men, and re-established the Allies in their position. In this action the brave General Dampierre was killed. This was the first time that the English and French soldiers were brought into collision in the war; little did either party contemplate the terrible contest which awaited them, before it was terminated, within a few miles of the same place, on the plain of Waterloo.

Storming of  
the Camp at  
Famars. These repeated disasters convinced the Republicans of the necessity of remaining on the defensive, and striving only to prevent the siege of those great towns which had been fortified for the protection of the frontier. But the Allies, having now accumulated eighty thousand men in front of Valenciennes, resolved to make a general attack on the intrenched camp which covered that important city. The attack was fixed for the 23d, and was conducted by two grand columns, seconded by several partial demonstrations. The first column consisted of sixteen thousand men, under the Duke of York, the second, of eleven thousand men, was placed under the orders of General Ferrari. A thick fog at first concealed the hostile armies from each other, but soon after daybreak it rose like a curtain, and discovered the Republican troops posted in front of their intrenchments, and defended by a numerous artillery. The English troops under Abercromby, forming part of Ferrari's corps, advanced along with the Germans under Walmoden, crossed the Ronelle, and carried some of the redoubts of the camp, notwithstanding a vehement fire from the French artillery. The attack of the Duke of York having also been followed by the capture of three redoubts, and the whole allied Army encamped close to the intrenchments, the French resolved not to wait the issue of an assault on the following day, but evacuated their position during the night, and fell back to the famous camp of Cæsar, leaving Valenciennes to its fate (3).

The allies on this occasion lost an opportunity of bringing the war to a termination. Cobourg had eighty thousand men in the field: the French had not fifty thousand: had he acted with vigour, and followed up his advantage,

(1) Hard. ii. 246, 251. Jom. iii. 149, 157.

(3) Toul. iv. 10—13. Jom. iii. 165—170. Ann.

(2) Jom. iii. 160, 163. Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 169. Reg. 1793, p. 169.

Toul. iv. 6.

he might have destroyed the Republican army, and marched at the head of an irresistible force to Paris. But at that period, neither the allied cabinets nor generals were capable of such a resolution : the former looked only to a war of conquest and acquisition against France, in which the great object was to secure their advantages : the latter to a slow methodical campaign, similar to that pursued in ordinary times against a regular government (1).

Valenciennes and Condé invested.

It was immediately determined by the Allies to form the siege of Valenciennes and Condé. The army of observation, thirty thousand strong, encamped near Herinnes, fronting Bouchain, while a corps of equal strength under the Duke of York, was intrusted with the conduct of the siege. The garrison, consisting of nine thousand men, made a gallant defence; but the operations of the besiegers were conducted with the greatest activity. On the 14th June, the trenches were opened, and above two hundred and fifty pieces of heavy cannon, with ninety mortars, kept up a vigorous and incessant fire upon the works and the city. Upon the unfortunate inhabitants, the tempest fell with unmitigated severity, and several parts of the town were speedily in flames; but they bore their sufferings with great resignation, till the pangs of hunger began to be added to the terrors of the bombardment. Ultimately the approaches of the besiegers were chiefly supported by their subterranean operations. During the whole of July, the mines were pushed with the greatest activity, and on the 25th, three great globes of compression were ready to be fired under the covered way, while two columns, the first composed of English, the second of Germans, were prepared to take advantage of the confusion, and assault the ruins. At nine at night the globes were sprung with a prodigious explosion, and the assaulting columns immediately rushed forward with loud shouts, cleared the palisades of the covered way, pursued the Republicans into the interior works, where they spiked the cannon, and dislodged the garrison, but were unable to maintain their ground from the fire of the place. The outworks, however, being now in great part carried, and the consternation of the citizens having risen to the highest pitch, from the prospect of an approaching assault, the governor, on the 28th, was obliged to capitulate. The garrison, now reduced to seven thousand men, marched out with the honours of war, laid down their arms, and were permitted to retire to France, on condition of not again serving against the allies. It was employed, like that of Mayence, in the war against the Royalists in la Vendée and Toulon, and there rendered essential service to the Republican arms (2).

July 28. Blockade and Capitulation of Condé.

In this siege, the operations on both sides were conducted with great vigour and ability; and the French artillery even surpassed its ancient renown. The Allies threw eighty-four thousand cannon balls, twenty thousand shells, and forty-eight thousand bombs into the town. The governor, General Ferrand, was arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and but for the intervention of a commissioner of the Convention, would have forfeited his life for a defence highly honourable in itself, and which in the end proved the salvation of France, by the time which it afforded for the completion of the armaments in the interior (3).

The siege, or rather blockade of Condé, was less distinguished by remarkable events. After an obstinate resistance, it capitulated a short time before Valenciennes, the garrison having exhausted all their means of

(1) Hard. ii. 286—7.

(2) Jomini, iv. 171, 174, 181. Toul. iv. 42, 43.

(3) Jom. iii. 181.

subsistence. By this event, 3000 men were made prisoners, and an important fortress gained to the Allied Forces (1).

The capitulation of these two fortresses brought to light the fatal change in the object and policy of the war which had been agreed upon in the Congress of Antwerp. All Europe was in anxious suspense, awaiting the official announcement of the intentions of the Allies by the use which they made of their first considerable conquests, when the hoisting of the Austrian colours on their walls too plainly avowed that they were to be retained as permanent acquisitions by the Emperor. This was soon placed beyond a doubt by the proclamation issued by Prince Cobourg on 13th July 1793, which followed, in which he declared, "I announce by the present proclamation, that I take possession in name of His *Imperial and Royal Majesty*, and that I will accord to all the inhabitants of the *conquered* countries security and protection, hereby declaring that I will not exercise the power conferred upon me by the *Right of Conquest* but for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of individuals." This was immediately followed by the establishment of an Imperial and Royal Junta at Condé, for the administration of the conquered provinces, in the name of the Emperor, which commenced its operations by dispossessing all the revolutionary authorities, restoring the religious bodies, checking the circulation of assignats, and removing the sequestration from the emigrant estates (2).

The public revelation of this unhappy change in the objects of the coalition, was the first rude shock which its fortunes received. It sowed divisions among the Allies, as much as it united its enemies; Prussia now perceived clearly that the war had become one of aggression on the part of Austria, and conceiving the utmost disquietude, at such an augmentation of the power of her dreaded rival, secretly resolved to paralyze all the operations of her armies, now that Mayence, the bulwark of the north of Germany, was regained, and withdraw as soon as decency would permit, from a contest in which success appeared more to be dreaded than defeat. The French emigrants were struck with consternation at so decisive a proof of the intended spoliation of their country; Monsieur, afterwards Louis XVIII, solemnly protested, as guardian for his nephew, Louis XVII, against any dismemberment of his dominions: placards appeared on all the walls of Brussels, calling on all Frenchmen to unite, to save their country from the fate of Poland, to which it was suspected, not without reason, Dumouriez was no stranger; while the Convention, turning to the best account this announcement of intended conquest, succeeded in inspiring a degree of unanimity in defence of their country, which they never could have effected had the Allies confined themselves to the original objects of the war (3).

Castine  
takes shelter  
in trench-  
ed Camps.

Custine, removed from the army of the Rhine, was placed in command of the army in Flanders in the end of May. On his arrival at the camp of Cæsar, he found the soldiers in the most deplorable state, both of disorganization and military spirit; a large portion of the older troops had been withdrawn to sustain the war in la Vendée, and their place supplied by young conscripts, almost totally undisciplined, who were shaken by the first appearance of the enemy's squadrons. "He trembled," to use his own words, "at the thought of what might occur, if he followed the example of his predecessors, and made a forward movement before confidence and

(1) Toul. iv. 32.

(2) Hard. ii. 327, 328.

(3) Hard. ii. 329, 331.

discipline were re-established among the soldiers." His first care was to issue a severe proclamation, calculated to restore discipline; his next, to use the utmost efforts to revive the spirits of the troops; but, as he was still inferior in number to his opponents, he did not venture, notwithstanding the reiterated orders of the Convention, to make any movement for the relief of the besieged places. Incessantly engaged in teaching the conscripts the rudiments of the military art, he chose to brave the resentment of government, rather than lead them to certain butchery, and probable defeat. His firmness in discharging this important, but perilous duty, proved fatal to himself, but the salvation of France; it habituated an undisciplined crowd to the use of arms, and preserved, in a period of extreme peril, the nucleus of an army, on which the preservation of the Republic depended. But the Convention, impatient for more splendid achievements, and willing to ascribe every disaster to the fault of the generals, deprived him of the command, and on 24 July, ordered him to Paris to answer for his conduct; where he was soon after delivered over to the Revolutionary Tribunal, condemned, and executed, along with Beauharnais, accused of misconduct, in the attempt to raise the siege of Mayence, whose name the extraordinary fortunes of his widow have rescued from oblivion: cruel and unjust examples, which added to the numerous sins of the Republican government; but by placing its generals in the alternative of victory or death, contributed to augment the fearless energy which led to the subsequent triumphs of the French arms (1).

Rout in the Camp of Cæsar. Reinforced by the besieging armies, the forces under Prince Cobourg now amounted to above eighty thousand foot, and twenty thousand horse, all ready for action, a force greatly superior to the dispirited and inexperienced troops to which it was opposed. Shut up within the camp of Cæsar, the French army was avowedly unable to keep the field in presence of the Allies. Even this last stronghold they were not long permitted to retain.

August 8. In the beginning of August, they were attacked and driven from its trenches, with so much ease, that the rout could hardly be called a battle. The Republicans fled in confusion the moment the Allies appeared in sight; so precipitate was their flight, that, as at the battle of the Spurs, hardly a shot was fired or stroke given, before the whole army was dissolved. After this disaster, the Republicans retreated behind the Scarpe, the last defensible ground in front of Arras; after which there remained neither position to take, nor fortified place to defend, on the road to Paris. The Allies in great force were grouped within one hundred and sixty miles of Paris: fifteen days march would have brought them to its gates. Already Cambay was invested; Caen-Cambresis occupied; a camp formed between Péronne and St.-Quentin, and the light troops pushed on to Péronne and Bapaume. Irresolution prevailed in the French army, dismay in the capital, everywhere the Republican authorities were taking to flight: the Austrian Generals, encouraged by such extraordinary success, were at length urgent to advance and improve their successes, before the enemy recovered from their consternation; and if they had been permitted to do so, what incalculable disasters would Europe have been spared! We shall see in the subsequent chapter the deplorable division of interests which prevented this early termination of the war; and how deeply Great-Britain has cause to regret the

(1) Jom. iii. 182, 184, 185. Hard. ii. 343. Toul. iv. 44, 45.

narrow and selfish views which prompted the part she took in the transaction (1).

We have now arrived at the extreme point of success on the part of the Allies. From this period may be dated a series of disasters, which went on constantly increasing, though with great vicissitudes of fortune, till the French arms were planted on the Kremlin, and all Europe, from Gibraltar to the North Cape, had yielded to their arms. What were the causes which thus raised up the Republic from the lowest point of depression to the highest pitch of glory, will be considered in the next chapter; in the meantime, the events which have been commemorated, are pregnant with useful instruction, both to the soldier and the statesman.

General Reflections on these Events. 1. The first reflection which suggests itself, is the remarkable state of debility of the French Republic at an early period of its history, and the facility with which, to all appearance, its forces would have yielded to a vigorous and concentrated attack from the Allied Forces. Her armies, during the first three months of the campaign, were defeated in every encounter; a single battle, in which the Republican loss did not exceed four thousand men, occasioned the forfeiture of all Flanders; the frontiers of France itself were invaded with impunity, and the iron barrier broken through, to an extent never accomplished by Marlborough and Eugène, after successive campaigns, at the head of 100,000 men. Her army on the Flemish frontier did not exceed thirty thousand men, and they were in such a state of disorganization, that they could not by any exertions be brought to face the enemy. "The Convention," says Dumouriez, "had no other resource; but the army escaped from the camp of Famars to that of Cæsar. Had the Duke of York been detached by Cobourg against the camp of Cæsar, with half his forces, the siege of Valenciennes might have been continued with the other half, and the fate of France sealed in that position (2)." In the darkest days of Louis XIV, France was never placed in such peril, as after the capture of Valenciennes.

2. These considerations are calculated to dispel the popular illusions as to the capability of an enthusiastic population alone, to withstand the attacks of a powerful regular army. Notwithstanding the ardour excited by the successful result of the campaign in 1792, and the conquest of Flanders, the Republican levies were, in the beginning of the following campaign, in such a state of disorganization and weakness, that they were unable to make head against the Austrians in any encounter, and at length remained shut up in intrenched camps, from obvious and admitted inability to keep the field. The enemy by whom they were attacked, were by no means formidable, either from activity or conduct, and yet they were uniformly successful. What would have been the result, had the Allies been conducted with vigour and ability; by a Blücher, a Paskewitch, or a Wellington? By the admission of the Republicans themselves, their forces would have been subdued; the storming of the camp of Cæsar would have decided the fate of France (3).

3. Every thing conspires to indicate the ruinous effects which followed the resolution taken in the Congress at Antwerp to convert the war, heretofore undertaken for the overthrow of the Jacobins, into one of aggression and conquest of France itself. The great objects of the war should have been to have separated the cause of that fearful faction from that of the monarchy, and

(1) Hard. ii. 348, 349. Toul. vi. 45—49. Ann. Reg. 1793. 191.

(2) Dum. iv. 4. Hard. ii. 289.

(3) Dum. iv. 4. Jom. iii. 68.

joined in willing bands to the standards of the Allies, the heroes of la Vendée, and the generous citizens of Lyon. By that resolution they separated them for ever, and at length brought all the hearts of the Republic cordially and sincerely round the tricolor flag. The subsequent disasters of the war: the divisions which paralysed the combined Powers: the unanimity which strengthened the French, may in a great degree be traced to that unhappy deviation from its original principle; and it is remarkable that victory never again was permanently chained to their standards, till, taught by misfortune, they renounced this selfish policy, and recurred, in the great coalition of 1813, to the generous system which had been renounced at Antwerp twenty years before.

4. The important breathing truce which the time occupied in the siege of Valenciennes and Condé afforded to the French, and the immense advantage which they derived from the new levies which they received, and fresh organization which they acquired during that important period, is a signal proof of the vital importance of fortresses in contributing to national defence. Napoléon has not hesitated to ascribe to the three months thus gained the salvation of France (1). It is to be constantly recollected that the Republican armies were then totally unable to keep the field; that behind the frontier fortresses there was neither a defensive position, nor a corps to reinforce them; and that, if driven from their vicinity, the capital was taken, and the war concluded. The successful issue of the invasions of 1814 and 1815 afford no argument against these principles: the case of a million of disciplined men, under consummate leaders, assailing a single state, is not the rule but the exception.

Ease with which France might have been conquered if the Allies had held together.

5. The failure of the Allies to take advantage of the debilitated state of their adversaries, is the strongest proof of the erroneous system on which war was then conducted, and the peculiar ignorance which prevailed as to the mode of combating a revolutionary power. To divide a great army into an extensive chain of posts, and thereby lose all the benefit arising from superiority of force, is generally the weakest mode of conducting hostilities; but to do so with antagonists in a state of revolution, is, of all things, the most absurd. Passion is then predominant with the multitude; and how readily is one passion transformed into another; the fervour of ambition into that of fear! By protracting the contest, and conducting the operations on a slow and methodical plan, time is given for the completion of the revolutionary armaments, and the consternation spread among the people by a succession of disasters, allowed to subside. Repeatedly during the early stages of the war, advantages were gained by the Allies, which, if followed up with tolerable vigour, would have become decisive; as often did subsequent inactivity or caution render them abortive. New and Republican levies, easily elated and rendered formidable by victory, are as rapidly depressed by defeat; it is the quality of regular soldiers alone to preserve their firmness in periods of disaster, and present even after adverse, the intrepidity which recalls prosperous fortune. The system of attack should be suited to the character of the force by which it is opposed; the methodical campaign, indispensable in présence of veteran troops, is the worst that can be adopted with the ardent, but unsteady levies which are brought forward by a Revolutionary State.

(1) Nap. in las Cases, ii. 327.



Ruinous  
Effect of the  
English re-  
duction of  
Force.

6. The military establishment of 1792, is the never-ceasing theme of eulogium with the economical politicians of the present day, and incessant are the efforts to have the forces of the British Empire again reduced to that diminutive standard. The result of the first period of the campaign of 1793, may demonstrate how shortsighted, even in a pecuniary point of view, are such niggardly projects. Had Great-Britain, instead of twenty thousand, been able to have sent sixty thousand English soldiers to the Continent at that period, what results might have been anticipated from their exertions. Forty thousand native English broke the military strength of Napoléon at Waterloo; and what was the military power of France at the commencement of the war, compared to what was there wielded by that dreaded commander? What would have been gained to Britain had the successes of 1815 come in 1793; the camp of Cæsar been the field of Waterloo! How many hundreds of thousands required to be sacrificed; how many hundreds of millions expended, before the vantage-ground then held, was regained! So true it is, that a nation can never, with safety even to its finances, reduce too low its warlike establishment; that too severe an economy at one time begets too lavish a prodigality at another; and that years of tarnished reputation, and wasteful extravagance, are required to blot out the effects of a single undue pacific reduction.

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## CHAPTER XII.

## WAR IN LA VENDÉE.

## ARGUMENT.

Origin of the Religious Resistance in la Vendée to the Revolution—Character and aspect of the Country—The Bocage, its peculiar character—Manners of the Inhabitants and the Landlords—Strong Religious Feelings of the People—Discontents excited by the first Severity against the Priests—Previous Conspiracy in Brittany, and abortive attempts at Insurrection—The Levy of 300,000 Men occasions an insurrection over the whole Country—Fifty thousand Men are soon in arms—Their Leaders are appointed—Henri de Larochejaquelein joins them—First Conflicts, and great activity in the Country—The Peasants' rude Levies—Their enthusiastic Valour—But cannot be kept to their standards after any success—Their mode of giving Orders, and Fighting—Their Humanity till it was extinguished by the Republicans—Character of Bonchamps—Of Cathelineau—Of Henri de Larochejaquelein—Of M. de Lescure—Of d'Elbée—Stofflet, and Charette—The Forces which they severally Commanded—Savage Orders of the Convention to extinguish the Revolt—The Republicans are defeated at Thouars—Storming of Châtaigneraie and Fontenay—Bishop of Agra—Great Effect of that Incident—Victory over the Republicans at Fontenay—Repeated Successes of the Royalists—Their great Victory at Saumur—Cathelineau created Commander-in-Chief—The Royalists Defeated in their attack on Nantes—Death of Cathelineau—D'Elbée Generalissimo—General Invasion of the Bocage on all Sides—Arrival of the Garrison of Mayence—Able Design of Bonchamps, which is not Adopted—Defeat of the Republicans at Torfou—Defeat of General Rossignol and the Republicans at Coron—General Defeat of the Republican Invasion—Vigorous Exertions of the Government at Paris—Ruinous Divisions of the Royalists—Fresh Invasion by the Republicans—The Royalists are Defeated, and M. de Lescure mortally Wounded—Desperate State of the Royalists—Battle of Cholet, in which they are Defeated—And d'Elbée and Bonchamps mortally Wounded—Humanity of Bonchamps to Five Thousand Republican Prisoners—Atrocious Cruelty of the Republicans—Dreadful passage of the Loire—The Royalists enter Brittany—Battle of Château-Gonthier gained by them—Desperate State of the Republicans after their Defeat—Death of M. de Lescure—Attack on Granville—The Royalists are Repulsed—Their Retreat towards the Loire—They Defeat the Republicans at Pontorson, and at Dol—Their great Difficulties notwithstanding these Victories—They are Repulsed at Angers—Defeated with great loss at Mans—Their Hopeless State—Heroic Conduct of Henri de Larochejaquelein—Final Rout at Savenay—Tardy Movements of the English to Support the Insurgents—Operations of Charette—Death of Henri de Larochejaquelein, and the Prince of Talmont—Unheard-of Cruelties of the Republicans—Turreau and the Infernal Columns—Executions at Nantes—Company of Marat—Carrier—Republican Marriages and Baptisms—Dreadful Scenes in the Prisons—Adventure of Agatha Larochejaquelein, and Madame de Bonchamps—Cruelty of the small Shopkeepers in the Towns—Heroic Benevolence of the Country Peasants—Reflections on the extraordinary Successes of the Vendéens, and the Causes of their Disasters—Vendéen War finally commits the Revolution against Religion.

THE French Revolution was a revolt not only against the government and institutions, but the opinions and the belief of former times. It was ushered in by an inundation of scepticism and infidelity; it was attended by unexampled cruelty to the ministers of religion; it led to the overthrow of every species of devotion, and the education of a generation ignorant even of the first elements of the Christian faith. When the French soldiers approached the cradle of their religion, when they beheld Mount Carmel and Nazareth, when they visited the birth-place of Christ, and saw from afar the scene of his sufferings, the holy names inspired them with no emotion; they gazed on them only as Syrian villages, unconnected either by history or tradition,

with any interesting recollections. The descendants of Godefroy of Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse, of those who perished in the service of the holy sepulchre, viewed the scenes of the Crusaders' glory with indifference; and names at which their forefathers would have thrilled with emotion, were regarded by them only as the abode of barbarous tribes (1).

Origin of  
the Religi-  
ous Resis-  
tance in la  
Vendée to  
the Revolu-  
tion.

But it was not in the nature of things, it was not the intention of Providence, that this prodigious Revolution should be effected without a struggle, or the Christian faith obliterated for a time from a nation's thoughts, without a more desperate contest than the dearest interest of present existence could produce. Such a warfare accordingly arose, and marked too with circumstances of deeper atrocity than even the Reign of Terror, or the rule of Robespierre. It began, not amidst the dignity of rank, or the lustre of courts; not among those distinguished by their knowledge, or blessed by their fortune, but among the simple inhabitants of a remote district; among those who had gained least by the ancient institutions, and periled most in seeking to restore them. While the nobility of France basely fled on the first appearance of danger, while the higher orders of the clergy betrayed their religion by their pusillanimity, or disgraced it by their profligacy; the dignity of patriotism, the sublimity of devotion, appeared amidst the simplicity of rural life; and the peasants of la Vendée set an example of heroism which might well put their superiors to the blush, for the innumerable advantages of fortune which they had misapplied, and the vast opportunities of usefulness which they had neglected. It was there too, as in the first ages of Christianity, that the noblest examples of religious duty were to be found; and while the light of reason was unable to restrain its triumphant votaries from unheard of excesses, and stained with blood the efforts of freedom; the village pastors, and uneducated flocks of la Vendée bore the temptations of victory without seduction, and the ordeal of suffering without dismay.

Character  
and Aspect  
of the Coun-  
try.

The district immortalized by the name of la Vendée, embraces a part of Poitou, of Anjou, and of the county of Nantes, and is now divided into four departments, those of Loire-Inférieure, Maine-et-Loire, Deux-Sèvres, and la Vendée. It is bounded on the north by the Loire, from Nantes to Angers; on the west, by the sea; on the south, by the road from Niort to Fontenay, Luçon, and the Sables d'Olonne; on the east, by a line passing through Brissac, Thouars, Parthenay, and Niort. This space comprehends the whole of what was properly the seat of the la Vendée contest, and contains 800,000 souls (2); the Loire separated that district from that which afterwards became so well known from the Chouan wars.

This country differs, both in its external aspect, and the manners of its inhabitants, from any other part of France. It is composed for the most part of inconsiderable hills, not connected with any chain of mountains, but which rise in gentle undulations from the generally level surface of the country. The valleys are narrow, but of no great depth; and at their bottom flow little streams, which glide by a gentle descent to the Loire, or the neighbouring ocean. Great blocks of granite rise up at intervals on the heights, and resemble castellated ruins amidst a forest of vegetation. On the banks of the Sèvre, the scenery assumes a bolder character, and that stream flows in a deep and rocky bed amidst overhanging woods; but in the districts bordering on the

(1) Lav. i. 372.

(2) Guerres des Vend. i. 10. Branch. i. Th. iv. 165, et seq.

Loire, the declivities are more gentle, and extensive valleys reward the labours of the cultivator (1).

The Bocage.  
Its peculiar  
Character.

The Bocage, as its name indicates, is covered with trees; not indeed anywhere disposed in large masses, but surrounding the little inclosures into which the country is subdivided. The smallness of the farms, the great subdivision of landed property, and the prevalence of cattle husbandry, has rendered the custom universal of enclosing every field, how small soever, with hedges, which are surmounted by pollards, whose branches are cut every five years for firewood to the inhabitants. Little grain is raised, the population depending chiefly on the sale of their cattle, or the produce of the dairy; and the landscape is only diversified at intervals in autumn, by yellow patches glittering through the surrounding foliage, or clusters of vines overhanging the rocky eminences (2). The air in this region is pure, the farms small, the situation of the farm-houses, overshadowed by aged oaks, or peeping out of luxuriant foliage, picturesque in the extreme. There are neither navigable rivers nor canals, no great roads nor towns in the district; secluded in his leafy shroud, each peasant cultivates his little domain, severed alike from the elegancies, the ambition, or the seductions of the world (3).

The part of la Vendée which adjoins the ocean to the south of the district, and formerly was buried beneath its waves, is called the Marais, and bore a prominent part in this memorable contest. It is perfectly flat, and in great part impregnated by salt marshes, which never yield to the force of the sun. This humid country is intersected by innumerable canals, communicating with each other, which are planted with willows, alders, poplars, and other marsh trees, whose luxuriant foliage frequently overshadows the little enclosures. The peasants are never seen without a long pole in their hands, with the aid of which they leap over the canals and ditches with surprising agility. Nothing can be more simple than the habits of the inhabitants; one roof covers a whole family, their cows and lambs, which feed on their little possessions; the chief food of the people is obtained from milk, and the fish which they obtain in great quantities in the canals, with which their country is intersected. The silence and deserted aspect of these secluded retreats; the sombre tint of the landscape, and the sallow complexions of the inhabitants, give a melancholy air to the country; but in the midst of its gloom a certain feeling of sublimity is experienced even by the passing traveller (4); and in no part of France did the people give greater proofs of an elevated and enthusiastic character.

Personal ob-  
servation.

A single great road, that from Nantes to Rochelle, traverses the district; another from Tours to Bordeaux, by Poitiers, diverges from it, leaving betwixt them a space thirty leagues in extent, where nothing but cross roads are to be found. These cross roads are all dug out as it were between two hedges, whose branches frequently meet over the head of the passenger; while in winter, or rainy weather, they generally become the beds of streams. They intersect each other extremely often, and such is the general uniformity of the scenery, and the absence of any remarkable feature in the country, that the natives frequently lose themselves if they wander two or three leagues from their place of ordinary residence (5).

(1) Laroch. 31, 32. Beauch. i. 8.

(2) Guerres des Vend. i. 16. Laroch. 32. Beauch. i. 8. Th. iv. 165, 166.

(3) Beauch. i. 9.

(4) Beauch. i. 6, 7.

(5) Laroch. 34. Guerres des Vend. i. 16. Th. iv. 166, 167.

This peculiar conformation of the country offered the greatest obstacles to an invading army. "It is," says General Kléber "an obscure and boundless labyrinth, in which it is impossible to advance with security even with the greatest precautions. You are obliged, across a succession of natural redoubts and intrenchments, to seek out the road, the moment that you leave the great chaussée; and when you do find it, is generally a narrow defile, not only impracticable for artillery, but for the smallest species of chariots which accompany an army. The great roads have no other advantage in this respect but that arising from their greater breadth; for being every where, shut in by the same species of enclosure, it is rarely possible either to deploy into line, or become aware of your enemy till you are assailed by his fire (1)."

There are no manufactures or great towns in the country. The land is cultivated by *métayers*, who divide the produce with the proprietors, and it is rare to find a farm which yields the proprietor a profit of L.25 a-year. The sale of the cattle constitutes almost the whole wealth of the country. Few magnificent châteaux are to be seen; the properties are in general of moderate extent, the landlords all resident, and their habits simple in the extreme. The luxury and vices of Paris had never penetrated into the Bocage, the sole luxury of the proprietors consisted in rustic plenty and good cheer; their sole amusement the chase, at which they have long been exceedingly expert. The habits of the gentlemen rendered them both excellent marksmen, and capable of enduring fatigue without inconvenience; the ladies travelled on horseback, or in carts drawn by oxen (2).

Members  
of the Inhabit-  
ants and the  
Landlords.

But what chiefly distinguished this simple district from every other part of France, and what is particularly remarkable in a political point of view, is the relation, elsewhere unknown, which there subsisted between the landlords and the tenantry on their estates. The proprietor was not only always resident, but constantly engaged in connexions either of mutual interest, or of kindly feeling, with those who cultivated his lands. He visited their farms, conversed with them about their cattle, attended their marriages and christenings, rejoiced with them when they rejoiced, and sympathized with them when they wept. On holydays, the youths of both sexes danced at the château, and the ladies joined in the festive circle. No sooner was a boar or wolf hunt determined on, than the peasantry of all the neighbouring estates were summoned to partake in the sport; every one took his fusil, and repaired with joy to the post assigned to him; and they afterwards followed their landlords to the field of battle with the same alacrity with which they had attended them in those scenes of festivity and amusement (3).

These invaluable habits, joined to a native goodness of heart, rendered the inhabitants of the Bocage an excellent people; and it is not surprising that while the peasantry elsewhere in France revolted against their landlords, those of la Vendée almost all perished in combating with them against the Revolution. They were gentle, pious, charitable, and hospitable, full of courage and energy, with pure feelings and uncorrupted manners. Rarely was a crime, seldom a lawsuit, heard of amongst them. Their character was a mixture of savage courage and submissive affection to their benefactors; while they addressed their landlords with familiarity, they had the most

(1) Kléber, *Mém.* 19. *Gazettes des Vend.* i. 18.

(2) Laroch. 34. *Lac.* xi. 11, 12. *Th.* iv. 166.

(3) Laroch. 35. *Beauch.* i. 17, 18.

unbounded devotion to them in their hearts (1). Their temperament inclined them rather to melancholy; but they were capable, like most men of that character, of the most exalted sentiments. Slow and methodical in their habits, they were little inclined to adopt the revolutionary sentiments which had overspread so large a portion of the population in the more opulent districts of France; when once they were impressed with any truth, they invariably followed the course which they deemed right, without any regard either to its consequences; or the chances of success with which it was attended. Isolated in the midst of their woods, they lived alone with their children and their cattle; their conversation, their amusements, their songs, all partook of the rural character. Governed by ancient habits, they detested every species of innovation, and knew no principle in politics or religion, but to fear God and honour the King (2).

Strong Religious Feelings of the People.

Religion, as might naturally be expected with such manners, exercised an unbounded sway over these simple people. They looked up with filial veneration to their village pastors, whose habits and benevolence rendered them a faithful image of the primitive church. But little removed from their flocks either in wealth, situation, or information, they sympathized with their feelings, partook of their festivities, assuaged their sorrows. They were to be seen beside the cradle of childhood, the fireside of maturity, the deathbed of age; they were regarded as the best friends of this life, and the dispensers of eternal felicity in that to come. The supporters of the Revolution accused them of fanaticism; and doubtless there was a great degree of superstition mingled with their belief, as there must be with that of every religious people in the early stages of society; but it was a superstition of so gentle and holy a kind, as proved a blessing rather than a misfortune to those who were subjected to its influence; and while the political fanaticism of the Revolution steeped its votaries in unheard-of atrocities, the religious fanaticism of la Vendée only drew tighter the bonds of moral duty, or enlarged the sphere of Christian charity (3).

When the Revolution broke out in 1789, the inhabitants of this district were not distinguished by any peculiar opposition to its tenets. Those who dwelt in the towns were there, as elsewhere, warm supporters of the new order of things: and though the inhabitants of the Bocage felt averse to any changes which disturbed the tranquillity of their rural lives, yet they yielded obedience to all the orders of the Assembly, and only showed their predilection for their ancient masters, by electing them to all the situations of trust of which they had the disposal. In vain the revolutionary authorities urged them to exert the privileges with which the new constitution had invested them; the current ran so strongly in favour of the old proprietors, that all their efforts were fruitless. When the National Guards were formed, the seigneur was besought in every parish to become its commander; when the mayors were to be appointed, he was immediately invested with the dignity; when the seignorial seats were ordered to be removed from the churches, the peasants refused to execute it; all the efforts of the revolutionists, like throwing water on a higher level, only brought an accession of power to the depositaries of the ancient authority. A memorable instance of the kindly feeling which necessarily grows up between a resident body of landed proprie-

(1) Laroche, 35. Guerres des Vend. i. 24. Th. iv. 156.

(2) Beauch. i. 14, 15.

(3) Laroche. 35. Th. iv. 167. Guerres des Vend. i. 29, 31. Lac. xi. 9—13.

tors and the tenantry on their estates; and a decisive proof of the triumphant stand which might have been made against the fury of the Revolution, had the same kindly offices which had there produced so large a return of gratitude on the part of peasantry existed on the landlord's side in the other parts of France (1).

Discontent  
excited by  
the first se-  
verity  
against the  
Priests.

It was the violent measures of the Assembly against the clergy which first awakened the sympathy of the rural tenantry. When the people in the Bocage saw their ancient pastors, who had been drawn from their own circle, bred up amongst themselves, and to whom they were attached by every bond of affection and gratitude, removed because they refused to take the revolutionary oaths, and their place supplied by a new set of teachers, imbued with different tenets, strangers in the country, and ignorant of its dialect, their indignation knew no bounds. They ceased to attend the churches where the intruding clergy had been installed, and assembled with zeal in the woods and solitudes, where the expelled clergy still taught their faithful and weeping flocks. The new clergyman of the parish of Echaubroignies was obliged to quit his living from the experienced impossibility of procuring either fire or provisions in a parish of four thousand inhabitants (2). These angry feelings led to several contests between the National Guards of the towns, or the gendarmerie and the peasantry, in which the people suffered severely; and the heroism of the prisoners in their last moments augmented the loyalty and enthusiasm of the people.

Previous  
Conspiracy  
in Brittany,  
and abortive  
attempts at  
Insurrec-  
tion.

These causes produced a serious insurrection in the Morbihan near Vannes, in February 1790; but the peasants, though several thousands in number, were dispersed with great slaughter by the National Guard, and the severities exercised on the occasion long terrified the indignant inhabitants into submission. Another revolt broke out in May 1791, occasioned by the severities against the faithful clergy; and the heroism of the peasants who were put to death, evinced the strength of the religious enthusiasm which had now taken possession of their minds. "Lay down your arms," exclaimed several Republican horsemen to a peasant of Lower-Poitou, who only defended himself with a fork. "Restore me first my God," replied he, and fell pierced by two-and-twenty wounds (3).

During the summer of 1792, the gentlemen of Brittany entered into an extensive association, for the purpose of rescuing the country from the oppressive yoke which they had received from the Parisian demagogues. At the head of the whole was the Marquis de la Rouarie, one of those remarkable men who rise into eminence during the stormy days of a revolution, from conscious ability to direct its waves. Ardent, impetuous, and enthusiastic, he was first distinguished in the American war, when the intrepidity of his conduct attracted the admiration of the Republican troops, and the same qualities rendered him at first an ardent supporter of the Revolution in France; but when the atrocities of the people began, he espoused with equal warmth the opposite side, and used the utmost efforts to rouse the noblesse of Brittany against the plebeian yoke which had been imposed upon them by the National Assembly. He submitted his plan to the Count d'Artois, and had organized one so extensive as would have proved extremely formidable to the Convention, if the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, in Sep-

(1) Laroch. 36. Th. iv. 187. Guerres des Vend. i. 145. Lac. xi. 14. Beauch. i. 17, 25.

(2) Laroch. 38, 39. Guerres des Vend. i. 65. Lac. xi. 12, 13.

(3) Beauch. i. 26, 28.

tember 1792, had not damped the whole of the west of France, then ready to break out into insurrection. Still the organization continued, and he had contrived to engage not only all Brittany, but the greater part of the gentlemen of la Vendée, in the cause, when his death, occasioned by a paroxysm of grief for the execution of Louis, cut him off in the midst of his ripening schemes, and proved an irreparable loss to the Royalist party, by depriving it of the advantages which otherwise would have arisen from simultaneous and concerted operations on both banks of the Loire. The conspiracy was discovered after his death, and twelve of the noblest gentlemen in Brittany perished on the same day, in thirteen minutes, under the same guillotine. They all behaved with the utmost constancy, refused the assistance of the constitutional clergy, and after tenderly embracing at the foot of the scaffold, died exclaiming *Vive le Roi!* One young lady of rank and beauty, Angélique Desilles, was condemned by mistake for her sister-in-law, for whom she was taken. She refused to let the error be divulged, and died with serenity the victim of heroic affection (1).

March 10, 1793. The levy of 300,000 men on occasions an insurrection. These severities excited the utmost indignation among all the Royalists in the west of France. These feelings, with difficulty suppressed during the winter of 1792, broke out into open rebellion in consequence of the levy of 300,000 men ordered by the Convention in February 1793. The attempt to enforce this obnoxious measure occasioned a general resistance, which broke out without any previous concert, at the same time over the whole country. The chief points of the revolt were St.-Florent in Anjou, and Châtillon in Lower-Poitou; at the former of which placés, the young men, headed by Jacques Cathelineau, defeated the Republican detachment intrusted with the execution of the decree of the Convention, and made themselves masters of a piece of cannon. This celebrated leader, having heard of the revolt at St.-Florent, was strongly moved by the recital, addressing five peasants who surrounded him:—"We will be ruined," he exclaimed, "if we remain inactive; the country will be crushed by the Republic. We must all take up arms." The whole six set out amidst the tears of their wives and children, and fearlessly commenced a war with a power which the kings of Europe were unable to subdue (2).

March 14. A few days after, the insurrection assumed a more serious aspect at Cholet, which was attacked by several thousand armed peasants; the Republicans opposed a vigorous resistance, but they were at length overwhelmed by the number and resolution of the insurgents. An incident on that occasion marked in a singular manner the novel character of the war. In the line of retreat which the Republicans followed, was placed a representation of our Saviour on Mount Calvary, and this arrested the progress of the victors, as all the peasants, as they passed the holy spot, fell on their knees before the images, and addressed a prayer, with uplifted hands, before they resumed the pursuit. This continued even under a severe fire from the National Guards; the peasants threw themselves on their knees within twenty-five paces of the post occupied by the enemy, and bared their bosoms to the fatal fire, as if courting death in so holy a cause. When they made themselves masters of the town, instead of indulging in pillage or excesses of any sort, they flocked in crowds to the churches to return thanks to God; and contented themselves with the provisions which were voluntarily brought to them by

(1) Beauch. i. 34, 63, 70.

(2) Lac. xi. 47. Guerres de Vend. i. 67, 72. Beauch. i. 89, 90.



the inhabitants. Everywhere the insurrection bore the same character; the indignities offered to the clergy were its exciting cause; and a mixture of courage and devotion its peculiar character. In a few days fifty thousand men were in a state of insurrection in the four departments of la Vendée; but on the approach of Easter, the inhabitants all returned to their homes to celebrate their devotions; and a Republican column despatched from Angers, traversed the whole country without meeting with any opposition, or finding an enemy on their road (4).

Fifty thousand Men are soon in arms.  
 After the Easter solemnities were over, the peasants assembled anew; but they now felt the necessity of having some leaders of a higher rank to direct their movements, and went to the châteaux to ask the few gentlemen who remained in the country to put themselves at their head. They were not long in answering the appeal: M. de Lescure, de Larochejaquelein, Bonchamp, Stofflet, d'Elbée, put themselves at the head of the tenantry over which they had most influence: while the brave Cathelineau, though only a charioteer, who had already, by his successful enterprise, gained the confidence of the peasantry, was made commander-in-chief; names since immortalized in the rolls of Fame, and which long opposed an invincible barrier to the progress of revolution, and acquired only additional lustre, and shone with a purer light, from the suffering and disasters which preceded their fall (2).

Their Leaders are appointed.  
 While the peasants of the neighbouring parishes assembled to put themselves under Henri de Larochejaquelein, he addressed them in these memorable words:—"My friends, if my father was here he would be worthy of your confidence: I am but a youth, but I hope to show myself worthy of commanding you by my courage. If I advance, follow me; if I retreat, kill me; if I fall, avenge me." The peasants answered him with acclamations; but their arms and equipments were far from corresponding to the spirit by which they were animated. Most of them had no other weapon but scythes, pikes, and sticks; not two hundred fusils were to be found among many thousand men. Sixty pounds of powder, discovered in the hands of a miner, which had been used for blasting rocks, formed their whole ammunition. The skill and intrepidity of their chief, however, supplied every deficiency. He led them next day to attack a Republican detachment at Aubiers, and, by disposing them behind the hedges, kept up so murderous a fire upon the enemy, that they wavered, upon which he rushed forward at the head of the most resolute, and drove them from the field with the loss of two pieces of cannon (3).

First Conflicts, and great activity in the Country.  
 La Vendée soon became the theatre of innumerable conflicts, in which the tactics and success of the insurgents were nearly the same. An inconceivable degree of activity immediately prevailed over the whole country, the male population were all in insurrection, or busily engaged in the manufacture of arms; the shepherds converted their peaceful huts into work-shops, where nothing was heard but strokes of the hammer, and the din of warlike preparation. Instruments of husbandry were rudely transformed into hostile weapons; formed for the support of life, they became the deadly instruments of its destruction. Agriculture at the same time was not neglected, it was intrusted to the women and children;

(1) Laroch. 49. Jom. iii. 390. Beauch. i. 95, 97. (3) Laroch. 66, 67. Jom. iii. 390. Bonch. 41. 102. Th. iv. 171, 172. Guerres des Vend. i. 74, 76. Beauch. i. 141.

(2) Laroch. i. 49.

but if fortune proved adverse, and the hostile columns approached, they, too, left their homes, and flew to the field of battle, to stimulate the courage of their husbands, stanch their wounds, or afford them shelter from the pursuit of their enemies (1).

The Peasants' mode of fighting.

The method of fighting pursued by this brave but motley assemblage was admirably adapted both to the spirit by which they were animated, and the peculiar nature of the district in which the contest was conducted. Their tactics consisted in lining the numerous hedges with which the fields were enclosed, and remaining unseen, till the Republicans had got fairly enveloped by their forces; they then opened a fire at once from every direction, and with such fatal accuracy, that a large proportion of the enemy were generally prostrated by the first discharge. This thicket species of warfare continued till the Republican ranks began to fall into confusion; upon which they instantly leapt from their places of concealment with loud cries, and, headed by their chiefs, rushed upon the artillery. The bravest took the lead, fixing their eyes on the cannon's mouth, they prostrated themselves on the ground the moment they saw the flash; and rising up when the sound was heard, ran forward with the utmost rapidity to the battery, where the cannoneers, if they had not taken to flight, were generally bayoneted at their guns (2). In these exploits the chiefs always led the way; this was not merely the result of a buoyant courage, but of consideration, and necessity; the Vendéens were in that stage of society, when ascendancy is acquired by personal daring, and the soldiers have no confidence in the chiefs, if they are not before them in individual prowess (3).

Although the Vendéens took up arms for the royal cause, the most perfect confusion of ranks pervaded their forces. High and low, rich and poor, were, at the commencement of the war, alike ignorant of the military art. The soldiers were never drilled, a limited number of them only had been habituated to the use of fire-arms. In this extremity the choice of the soldiers fell on the most intrepid or skilful of their number, without much attention to superiority of station. A brave peasant, a shopkeeper in a little town, was the comrade of a gentleman: they led the same life, were interested in the same objects, shared the same dangers. The distinction of birth, the pride of descent, even the shades of individual thought, were obliterated in the magnitude of present perils. Many differences of opinion existed in the beginning of the contest, but the atrocities of the Republicans soon made them disappear in the Royalist army. Persons of intelligence or skill, of whatever grade, became officers, they knew not how; the peasants insensibly ranged themselves under their orders, and maintained their obedience only as long as they showed themselves worthy to command (4).

It was extremely difficult for the Republicans in the outset to withstand this irregular force, acting in such a country, and animated with so enthusiastic a spirit. There was in all the early actions a prodigious difference between their losses and those of their opponents. The peasants, dispersed in single file between the hedges, fired with a clear view of their enemies, who were either in columns, or two deep, in the fields; while their fire could only be answered by a discharge at a green mass, through which the figures of the Royalists were scarcely discernible. Harassed and disconcerted by this mur-

(1) Bouch. 43. Jom. iii. 390.

(2) Bonchamps, 43. Beauch. i. 187. Laroch. 68. Jom. iii. 391.

(3) Laroch. 66. Beauch. i. 186, 187.

(4) Laroch. 69, 100, 101. Beauch. i. 185—190.

derous fire, the Republicans were rarely able to withstand the terrible burst, when, with loud shouts, the Royalists broke from their concealment, and fell sword in hand on the thinned ranks of their opponents. Defeat was still more bloody than action. Broken and dispersed, they fled through a woody and impervious country, and fell into the hands of the few peasantry who still remained in the villages, and assembled with alacrity to complete the destruction of their enemies. When the Royalists, on the other hand, were broken, they immediately dispersed, leapt over the hedges, and returned home without the victors being able to reach them. Nowise discouraged by the reverse, they assembled again in arms, with renewed hopes, in a few days, and gaily took the field, singing, "Vive le Roi quand même! (1)."

When a day was fixed on for any exploit, the tocsin sounded in the village assigned as the rendezvous of the peasants—the neighbouring steeples repeated the signal, the farmers abandoned their homes if it was night, their ploughs if day, hung their fusils over their shoulders, bound their girdle loaded with cartouches round their waists, tied their handkerchiefs over the broad-brimmed hats which shaded their sun-burnt visages, addressed a short prayer to God, and gaily repaired to the appointed place with a full confidence in the protection of Heaven and the justice of their cause. There they met the chiefs, who explained to them the nature and object of the expedition on which they were to be employed; and if it was the attack of an enemy's column, the route they were to follow, the point of attack, and the hour and manner in which it was to be made. Immediately the groups dispersed, but the men regained their ranks; every one repaired to the station assigned to him, and soon every tree, every bush, every tuft of broom which adjoined the road concealed a peasant holding his musket in one hand, resting on the other, watching like a savage animal, without either moving or drawing his breath (2).

Meanwhile the enemies' column advanced, preceded by a cloud of scouts and light troops, who were allowed to proceed without challenge close to the lurking foe. They waited till the division was fairly engaged in the defile, and was so far advanced that it could not recede; then a cry was suddenly raised like that of a cat, and repeated along the whole line, as a signal that every one was at his post. If the same answer was given, a human voice was suddenly heard ordering the attack. Instantly a deadly volley proceeded from every tree, every hedge, every thicket: a shower of balls fell upon the soldiers without their being able to see the assailants, the dead and the wounded fell together into the bottom of the road, and if the column did not immediately fall into confusion, and the voice of the officer heard above the roar of musketry, roused them to burst through the hedges by which they were enveloped, the peasants instantly fell back behind the next enclosure, and from its leafy rampart a fire as deadly proceeded as that which mowed them down on the road. If this second hedge was carried in the same manner, three, four, ten, twenty entrenchments of the same sort offer their support to that murderous retreat: for the whole country is subdivided in this manner, and everywhere offers to its children an asylum, to its enemies a tomb (3).

Their enthusiastic  
valour.

But the great cause of the early and astonishing success of the Vendéens was their enthusiastic and indomitable valour. The

(1) Laroche. 69, 70. Beauch. i. 184, 188, 190.

(2) Desmoncourt, La Vendée, 30.

(3) Ibid. 31.

Republicans were, for the most part, composed of National Guards and Volunteers, who, though greatly better armed, equipped, and disciplined, were totally destitute of the ardent devoted spirit with which the Royalists were animated. The former took the field from no common feeling, but from the terror of the requisitions and sanguinary measures of the Convention; the latter fought alongside of their neighbours and landlords, in defence of their hearths, their children, and their religion; the one acted in obedience to the dictates of an unseen, but terrible power, which had crushed the freedom in whose name they were arrayed; the other yielded to their hereditary feelings of loyalty, and deemed themselves secure of Paradise in combating for their salvation (1).

Had the Vendéen chiefs possessed the same authority over their troops, which is enjoyed by the commanders of regular soldiers, they might at one time have marched to Paris, and done that which all the forces of the Coalition were unable to effect. But their greatest success was always paralyzed, by the impossibility of retaining the soldiers at their colours for any considerable length of time. The bulk of the forces were never assembled for more than three or four days together. No sooner was the battle lost or won, the expedition successful or defeated, than the peasants returned to their homes. The chiefs were left alone with a few hundred deserters or strangers, who had no family to return to, and all the advantages of former success were lost for want of the means of following them up. The army, however, was as easily reformed as it was dissolved; messengers were despatched to all the parishes; the tocsin sounded, the peasants assembled at their parish churches, when the requisition was read, which was generally in the following terms:—"In the holy name of God! and by the command of the King; this parish is invited to send as many men as possible to such a place, at such an hour, with provisions for so many days." The order was obeyed with alacrity; the only emulation among the peasants was, who should attend the expedition. Each soldier brought a certain quantity of bread with him, and some stores were also provided by the generals. The corn and oxen necessary for the subsistence of the army were voluntarily furnished by the gentlemen and chief proprietors, or drawn by requisitions from the estates of the emigrants, and as the troops never remained together for any length of time, no want of provisions was ever experienced. The villages vied with each other for the privilege of sending carts for the service of the army, and the peasant girls flocked to the chapels on the road-side to furnish provisions to the soldiers, or offer up prayers for their success (2).

The army had neither chariots nor baggage-waggons; tents were totally out of the question. But the hospitals were regulated with peculiar care; all the wounded, whether Royalists or Republicans, being transported to St.-Laurent-sur-Sèvre, where the charitable sisters and religious votaries, who flocked from all quarters to the scene of woe, assuaged their sufferings. They never could be brought to establish patrols or sentinels, or take any of the precautions against surprise, which are in use among regular troops; and this irregularity not only exposed them to frequent reverses, but rendered unavailing their greatest successes. The men marched, in general, four

(1) *Guerres des Vend.* i. 55. Laroch. 70. Beauch. i. 185, 189.

(2) Laroch. 101, 102. *Jom.* iii. 390, 391, 397. Th. iv. 174. Beauch. i. 184. *Guerres des Vend.* i. 98.

abreast, the officers in front being alone acquainted with their destination. They had few dragoons; and their cavalry, which never exceeded nine hundred men, was almost entirely mounted by the horses taken from the Republicans (1).

Their Mode  
of giving  
Orders and  
Fighting.

When the troops were assembled, they were divided into different columns, to attack the points selected by the generals. The only orders given, were—Such a leader goes such a road; who follows him? Arrived at the point of attack, the commands were given after the same fashion: Move towards that house, towards that tree; leap that hedge, were the only orders ever issued. Neither threats, nor the promise of rewards, could induce them to send forward scouts; when that duty was necessary, the officers were obliged to take it upon themselves. The peasants never went into battle without saying their prayers, and generally made the sign of the cross before they discharged their firelocks. They had a few standards, which were displayed on important occasions; but no sooner was the victory gained, than they piled standards and drums upon their carts, and returned with songs of triumph to their villages (2).

When the battle began, and the sound of the musketry and cannon was heard, the women, the children, the sick, and the aged, flocked to the churches, or prostrated themselves in the fields to implore a blessing on their arms. With truth it might be said, that, on such occasions, there was but one thought, one wish, throughout all la Vendée; every one awaiting, in prayer, the issue of a struggle on which the fate of all depended (3).

As the insurrection broke out from the prevalence of a common feeling, without any previous concert, so it was conducted without any definite object, or the least alloy of individual ambition. Even after their great successes had inspired the most desponding with the hope of contributing in a powerful manner to the restoration of the monarchy, the wishes of the insurgents were of the most moderate kind. To have the King once visit their sequestered country; to be allowed, in memory of the war, to have a white flag on each steeple; to be permitted to furnish a detachment for the body-guard of the sovereign, and to have some old projects for the improvement of the roads, and navigation of the country, carried into effect, constituted the sole wishes of those whose valour had so nearly accomplished the restoration of the monarchy (4).

Their Humanity, till it was extinguished by the Republicans.

The early successes of the Vendéens, and their enthusiastic valour, did not extinguish the humanity which their dispositions, and the influence of religion had nourished in their bosoms. In the latter stages of the war, the atrocities of the Republicans, the sight of their villages in flames, and their wives and children massacred, inflamed an unextinguishable desire of vengeance; but during the first months of the contest, their gentleness was as touching as their valour was admirable. After entering by assault into the towns, they neither pillaged the inhabitants, nor exacted either contribution or ransom; frequently they were to be seen, shivering with cold, or starving with hunger, in quarters abounding both with fuel and provisions (5). "In the house where I lodged," says Madame de Larochejaquelein, at Bressuire, "there were many soldiers, who were lamenting that they had no tobacco; I asked if there was none in the town.

(1) Beuch. i. 185, 186. Laroche. 103

(2) Laroche. 104. Jom. iii. 390, 391.

(3) Laroche. 104.

(4) Laroche. 104, 105.

(5) Laroche. 90.

'Plenty,' they replied, 'but we have no money to buy it.' Under our windows a quarrel arose between two horsemen, and the one wounded the other slightly with his sabre; his antagonist quickly disarmed him, and was proceeding to extremities, when M. de Larochejaquelein exclaimed from the windows — 'Jesus-Christ pardoned his murderers, and a soldier of the Christian army is about to kill his comrade.' The man, abashed, put up his sabre, and embraced his enemy (1)." These touching incidents occurred in a town recently carried by main force, occupied at the time by twenty thousand insurgents, and peculiarly obnoxious to the Royalists, from the cruelty which its National Guards had exercised towards the peasantry. "In this town," she adds, "I was surprised, in the evening, to see all the soldiers in the house with me on their knees at prayers, and the streets filled with peasants at their devotion; when they were concluded, they led me out to see their favourite cannon, called Marie-Jeanne, their first trophy from the Republicans, which, after having been retaken, had again fallen into their hands; it was decorated with flowers and ribands, and the peasants embraced it with tears of joy." When Thouars was carried by assault, the Republican inhabitants were in the utmost consternation, as they anticipated a severe retaliation for the massacre perpetrated by them upon the Royalists in that town, in the August preceding. What then was their astonishment, when they beheld the soldiers, instead of plundering or committing acts of cruelty, flocking to the churches, and returning thanks to God at the altars for the success with which he had blessed their arms! Even the garrison was treated with the most signal humanity. Twelve only were retained from each department, as hostages, and the remainder, without either ransom or exchange, dismissed to their homes (2).

In one district only the insurrection was stained with the most frightful atrocities. In the marshes of Lower-Poitou the peasants were seized with an uncontrollable thirst for vengeance, in consequence of the cruelties exercised by the Republicans on the Royalist leaders during the insurrection of the preceding summer. Machecoul was captured during the absence of Charette; and under the influence of revolting news of the Republican cruelties at Nantes and Paris, the prisons were forced by a furious mob, and above eighty Republicans massacred in one day. Nearly five hundred Republicans fell victims to the rage of a Royalist Committee, at the head of which was a wretch named Souchu, who soon after hoisted his true colours and joined the Republicans, but fell a victim to the just indignation of the widows of those he had murdered (3). Charette, on his return, was horror-struck at these atrocities, and finding his military authority not yet sufficiently established to coerce them, he had recourse to the clergy to aid his efforts. They fabricated a miracle at the tomb of a saint to influence the minds of the people, and while they were prostrated round the altar, conjured them, in the name of the God of Peace, never to kill but in the hour of combat. At the same time, Charette forbid any prisoner to be slain in his army, under pain of death, and concealed in his own house several zealous Republicans, whose heads were loudly demanded by his soldiers. By these means, the cruelty which had commenced and stained the Royalist cause in Lower-Poitou, was arrested, and a reply made, in a true Christian spirit, to the savage decrees of the Con-

(1) Laroche. i. 91.

(2) Beauch. i. 163, 164. *Guerres des Vend.* i. 89.(3) Beauch. i. 123, 124, 129. *Th. iv.* 173.

March 19,  
1793.

vention, which had ordered every Vendéen taken in arms to be put to death without mercy in twenty-four hours (1).

Character of  
Bouchamps.

M. Bouchamps, chief of the army of Anjou, was the most distinguished of the Royalist leaders. To the heroic courage of the other chiefs, he joined consummate military talents, and an eloquence which at once gave him an unlimited sway over the minds of the soldiers. Had he lived, the fate of the war would, in all probability, have been widely different, and the expedition beyond the Loire, which led to such disastrous results, the commencement of the most splendid success. Gentle in his manners, humane in his conduct, affable in his demeanour, he was adored by his soldiers, who were at once the most skilful and best disciplined of the Vendéen corps. In the midst of the furies of a civil war, and the dissensions of rival chiefs, he was the enemy of intrigue; free from personal ambition, he was intrusted with an important command, solely from his personal merits. His character may be appreciated from the words which he addressed to his young and weeping wife, when he put himself at the head of his troops. "Summon to your aid all your courage; redouble your patience and resignation, you will have need for the exercise of all these virtues. We must not deceive ourselves; we can look for no recompense in this world for what we are to suffer; all that it could offer would be beneath the purity of our motives, and the sanctity of our cause. We must never expect human glory; civil strife affords none. We shall see our houses burned; we shall be plundered, proscribed, outraged, calumniated, perhaps massacred. Let us thank God for enabling us to foresee the worst, since that presage, by redoubling the merit of our actions, will enable us to anticipate the heavenly reward which awaits those who are courageous in adversity, and constant in suffering. Let us raise our eyes and our thoughts to Heaven, it is there that we shall find a guide which cannot mislead, a force which cannot be shaken, an eternal reward for transitory grief (2)."

Of Cathelineau.

Cathelineau, a peasant by birth, and a charioteer by profession, was the first of the chiefs who acquired the unlimited confidence of the soldiers. To an extraordinary degree of intelligence, and the strongest natural sagacity, he joined a nervous eloquence, admirably calculated to influence the soldiers. His age was thirty-four years; his disposition humble, modest, and retiring. Such was his reputation for piety and rectitude, that the peasants called him the Saint of Anjou, and earnestly sought to be placed in battle by his side, deeming it impossible that those could be wounded who were near so unblemished a man (3).

Of Henri de  
Larochejaquelein.

Henri de Larochejaquelein, son of the Marquis Larochejaquelein, was the leader of all the parishes which were situated round Châtillon. He refused to follow the general tide of emigration, and on the contrary, repaired to Paris to defend the constitutional monarchy; and when the Revolt on the 10th August overturned the throne, he set out for la Vendée, exclaiming, "I will retire to my province, and soon you will hear of me." Though still young, he acquired the confidence of the soldiers by his invincible courage and coolness in action, which gained for him the surname of the Intrepid. He was reproached for being too forward, carried away by his ardour, and forgetting the general in the soldier. Frequently before making

(1) Pièces Just. No. 10. Beauch. i. 116, 123.

(3) Laroche. 95. Beauch. i. 91, 92.

(2) Bouch. 25. Beauch. i. 98. Jom. iii. 392. Th. iv. 176. Laroche. 93.

a prisoner, he offered to give him the chance of escape by a personal conflict. Councils of war, or the duties of a commander, fatigued his buoyant disposition, and he generally fell asleep after giving his opinion, and answered to the reproaches of his brother officers, "Why do you insist upon making me a general; I wish only to be a hussar, to have the pleasure of fighting." Notwithstanding this passion for danger, he was full of sweetness and humanity, and when the combat was over, no one was more generous to the vanquished. Even after his eminent services, he formed only the most humble wishes for himself. "Should we replace the King on the throne," said he, "I hope he will give me a regiment of hussars." He performed the most eminent services in the war, and at its most critical period, was unanimously elected to the supreme command. After innumerable heroic actions, he fell in an obscure skirmish, and was interred in the cemetery of St.-Aubin. "Chance," says the annalist, "has covered his tomb, as well as that of his brother Louis, with the Flower of Achilles; and never did it blossom over remains more worthy of the name (1)."

*Of M. de Lescure.* M. de Lescure, the cousin and intimate friend of Henri de Larochefoucault, was distinguished by a bravery of totally different character; cool, intrepid, and sagacious, he was not less daring than his youthful comrade; but his valour was the result of reflection and a sense of duty. His counsels were much regarded from his knowledge of fortification and the art of war, but a certain degree of obstinacy diminished the weight of his opinions. His humanity was angelic; during the whole of that terrible war, in which generals as well as soldiers so often fought personally with their enemies, no one ever fell by his hand; and even in the worst times, when the cruelties of the Republicans had roused the most gentle to fury, he incessantly laboured to save the lives of the prisoners. Learned, studious, and thoughtful, he had prescribed to himself, at the age of eighteen, the most severe economy to discharge the debts of an extravagant father: and it was not till he was twenty-five, and had become a father, that gentler feelings softened the native austerity of his character. His young wife, only daughter of the Marquis of Donnissan, a rich heiress, united to all the beauty and graces more than the courage of her sex. The only occasion on which he was ever heard to swear, was when his indignant soldiers massacred a prisoner behind his back, whom he had disarmed in the act of discharging a musket at his bosom. The number of lives which he saved during the war was incalculable; and alone of all the chiefs in that memorable struggle, it could be said with truth, that his glory was unstained by human blood (2).

*Of d'Elbée.* In the Grand Army, as it was called, of la Vendée, the principal chief was M. d'Elbée, of Saxon descent, but naturalized in France. He was forty years old when the contest commenced, ignorant of the world, devout, enthusiastic, and superstitious; but his principal merit consisted in an extraordinary coolness in danger, which rivalled that of Marshal Ney himself. His devotion was sincere, but finding, like Cromwell, that it was the most powerful lever to move the peasants, he carried it to an extravagant height. He acquired, by extraordinary sanctity, an unbounded ascendancy over his soldiers, and justified their confidence by great talents as a leader, which ultimately led to his appointment as commander in chief; a situation which he filled with unshaken firmness during a period of disaster and ruin (3).

(1) Genoude, 47. Bonch. 41. Laroch. 96, 98. (2) *Jom. iii. 392. Thureau, Mem. 92. Brauch. i. 97. Th. iv. 176.*

(3) Laroch. 97. Bonch. 47. Beauch. i. 147.



**Stofflet.** Stofflet, an Alsatian by birth, and a gamekeeper by profession, was early distinguished by his devotion to the Royal cause, and headed some of the first detachments which took the field. Endowed with a powerful frame, hardy in his habits, harsh in his manners, he never acquired, like the chiefs of gentle blood, the love of the soldiers; but his stern character and unbending severity made him more implicitly obeyed than any other leader, and on that account his services were highly prized by the Royalist generals (1). Active, intelligent, and brave, he was a skilful partisan, rather than a consummate general; and when the death of the other chiefs opened to him the way to a high command, his ambition and jealousy contributed much to the ruin of the common cause.

**And Charette.** Charette, the last of this illustrious band, succeeded to eminence late in the struggle, and when the war had become an affair of posts, rather than a regular contest. He was originally a lieutenant in the navy, and of a feeble and delicate constitution; but the habits of the chase, to which he was passionately attached, and in which he frequently lay for months in the woods, strengthened his frame to such a degree as rendered him capable of enduring any fatigue, and made him intimately acquainted both with the peasantry, and the country which he had occasion to traverse. He was for some days unwilling to place himself at the head of the peasantry, who entreated him to take the command, from a distrust of success with their feeble means; and when he was prevailed on, he showed at once his decision of character, by requiring from them instantaneous submission to his orders, and his spirit of devotion, by taking an oath on the Gospels, at the High Altar of the Church of Machecoul, to be faithful to the cause of God and the throne. His courage was unconquerable, his firmness invincible, his resources unbounded: and long after the conflict had become hopeless in other quarters, he maintained, in the marshes and forests of Lower-Vendée, a desperate struggle. Such was the terror inspired by his achievements, that when he was at the head of only fourteen followers, the Convention offered him a million of francs if he would retire to England; but he refused the bribe, and preferred, even with that inconsiderable band, to wage war with a power to which the Kings of Europe were hastening to make submission (2). Betrayed at length to his enemies, he met his fate with unshaken firmness, and left the glorious name of being the last and most indomitable of the Vendéen chiefs.

The troops which these chiefs commanded were divided into three divisions. The first, or the Army of Anjou, under the orders of Bonchamps, composed of twelve thousand men, was destined to combat the Republicans from the side of Angers. The second, called the Grand Army, under the command of d'Elbée, amounted to twenty thousand men, and on important occasions it could be raised to double that amount. The third, called the Army of the Marais, obeyed the orders of Charette, and at one time also was raised to twenty thousand combatants. Besides these, a corps of twelve thousand men was stationed at Montaigut, to observe the garrison of Luçon, and several smaller bodies, amounting in all to three thousand men, kept up the communications between these larger corps (3).

The early measures of the Convention to crush the insurrection, were

The forces  
which they  
severally  
commanded.

(1) Laroche. 95. Jom. iii. 394. Beauch. i. 95.  
(2) Th. iv. 175, and viii. 216. Beauch. i. 105,  
106. Laroche. 415.

(3) Jom. iii. 388. Laroche. 92. Th. iv. 175, 176.

marked by the bloody spirit which had so long characterised their proceedings. Orders were despatched, on the first intelligence of the revolt, to the Republican soldiers, to exterminate men, women, children, animals, and vegetation. They sent against them the ruffian bands of the Marseillais, who, on their arrival at Bressuire, immediately exclaimed, that they must begin by massacring the prisoners; and surrounding the prison, put to death eleven peasants, who had been seized in their beds a few days before on suspicion of being in concert with the insurgents.

Savage Orders of the Convention to Extinguish the Revolt.

The fate of these brave men, who were cut down with sabres while on their knees praying to God, and exclaiming "Vive le Roi," excited a universal enthusiasm among the inhabitants. "It is painful," said the Republican Commissioners, "to be obliged to proceed to extremities; but they cannot be avoided, from the fanaticism of the peasants, who, in no one instance, have been known to betray their landlords. We must cut down the hedges and woods; decimate the inhabitants; send the remainder into the interior of France; and repeople the country by colonies of patriots (1)."

Nor were these atrocities the work merely of the generals in command. By a solemn decree of the Convention, they were enjoined to proceed with unheard-of rigour against the insurgents. By this sanguinary law, "all the persons who have taken any share in the revolts are declared *hors la loi*, and in consequence deprived of trial by jury, and all the privileges accorded by law to accused persons; if taken in arms, they are to be shot within twenty-four hours by a military commission, proceeding on the testimony of a single witness; those who had any share in the revolt, though not taken in arms, shall be subjected to the same mode of trial and punishment; all the priests and nobles, with their families and servants, shall undergo the same punishment; the pain of death shall in all cases draw after it a confiscation of goods, and the same shall hold with those slain in battle, when the corpse is identified before the criminal judges (2)."

The Royalists, in no instance in the commencement of the war, resorted to any measures of retaliation, except at Machecoul, where the peasants, as already noticed, immediately after the insurrection, and before Charette had succeeded to the command, exercised the most revolting cruelties. These atrocities, to which the armies of la Vendée proper were ever a stranger, and which were severely repressed by Charette, when he arrived at the command, did incalculable injury to the Royalist cause, by the horror which it inspired in the neighbouring towns (3). It not only prevented the opulent city of Nantes from joining the insurrection, but produced that obstinate resistance on the part of its inhabitants to the attack of Cathelineau, which occasioned the first and greatest of their reverses.

They are defeated at Thouars. 4th May, 1795.

But the Republicans soon found that they had a more formidable enemy to contend with than the unarmed prisoners, on whom their atrocities at Paris had so long been exercised. The first expedition of importance undertaken by the Royalists was against Thouars, which was occupied by General Quétinau, with a division of seven thousand men. A large proportion of the peasants were brought into action for the first time; but their courage supplied the place both of discipline and experience. After a severe fire, the ammunition of the Royalists began to fail, upon which M. de Lescure seized a fusil from a soldier, descended the heights on which his

(1) Bonch. 22, 71, 72, 73.

(2) Decree, March 19, 1793, Beauch, i, 367.

(3) Laroche. 481.

troops were posted, and calling to the soldiers to follow him, rushed over the bridge which led to the city. A tremendous discharge of grape and musketry deterred even the bravest of his followers, and he stood alone amidst the smoke; he returned to his companions, and exhorted them to follow him, and again tried the perilous pass; but again he stood alone, his clothes riddled with balls. At this moment Henri de Larochejaquelein came up, and along with Foret, and a single peasant, advanced to support their heroic comrade; all four rushed over the bridge, followed by the soldiers, who now closely pursued their steps, assailed and carried the barricades, while Bonchamps, who had discovered a ford at a short distance, destroyed a body of the National Guard who defended it, and drove the Republicans back to the town. Its ancient walls could not long resist the fury of the victors; Henri de Larochejaquelein, by mounting on the shoulders of a soldier, reached the top of the rampart, helped up the boldest of his followers, and speedily the town was carried. Six thousand prisoners, twelve cannons, and twenty caissons, fell into the hands of the Royalists. Though strongly inclined to Republican principles, and stained by the massacre of the Royalists in the preceding August, the city underwent none of the horrors which usually await a place taken by assault; not an inhabitant was maltreated, nor a house pillaged; the peasants flocked to the churches to return thanks to God; and amused themselves with burning the tree of Liberty, and the papers of the Municipality (1).

5th May.

Encouraged by this success, the Vendéens advanced against Châtaigneraie which was garrisoned by four thousand Republicans. By a vigorous attack it was carried, and the garrison, after sustaining severe losses, with difficulty escaped to Fontenay. Thither they were followed by the Royalists; but the strength of the army melted away during the advance; great numbers of the peasants returned to cultivate their fields, and place their families in a place of security; and when the army came in sight of Fontenay, they only mustered ten thousand combatants. With this force they assailed the town; but though M. de Lescure and Larochejaquelein penetrated into the suburbs, the Royalists were defeated on other sides, with the loss of twenty-four pieces of cannon, including the celebrated Marie-Jeane, so much the object of their veneration; and the victorious wing with difficulty drew off their artillery from the place (2). This first check spread the deepest dejection through the army; Marie-Jeane, their favourite cannon, was taken; they had now only six pieces left; the ammunition was exhausted; the soldiers had only a single cartridge remaining for each musket; and they were returning in numbers to their villages. In this extremity, the firmness of the chiefs restored the fortune of the war; they instantly took their determination; fell back to Châtaigneraie, spoke cheerfully to the peasants, declared that the reverse was a punishment of Heaven for some disorders committed by the troops, and sent orders to the priests in the interior to send forward, without delay, all the strength of their parishes (3).

15th May.

Storming of  
Châtaigneraie,  
and  
Fontenay.

tered ten thousand combatants. With this force they assailed the town; but though M. de Lescure and Larochejaquelein penetrated into the suburbs, the Royalists were defeated on other sides, with the loss of twenty-four pieces of cannon, including the celebrated Marie-Jeane, so much the object of their veneration; and the victorious wing with difficulty drew off their artillery from the place (2). This first check spread the deepest dejection through the army; Marie-Jeane, their favourite cannon, was taken; they had now only six pieces left; the ammunition was exhausted; the soldiers had only a single cartridge remaining for each musket; and they were returning in numbers to their villages. In this extremity, the firmness of the chiefs restored the fortune of the war; they instantly took their determination; fell back to Châtaigneraie, spoke cheerfully to the peasants, declared that the reverse was a punishment of Heaven for some disorders committed by the troops, and sent orders to the priests in the interior to send forward, without delay, all the strength of their parishes (3).

An unexpected incident at this period contributed in a powerful manner to revive the Royalist cause. An Abbé, who had been seized by the Republicans, made his escape to the insurgents, declared that he was the Bishop of Agra, and arrived at Châtillon on the very day of the defeat. The peasants, overjoyed at having a bishop amongst

Bishop of  
Agra.  
Great Effect  
of that Incident.

(1) *Jom.* iii. 394. *Laroch.* 108, 112. *Bonch.* 27.  
28. *Beauch.* i. 161, 163.

(2) *Jom.* iii. 395. *Laroch.* 116, 117. *Beauch.* i. 171, 173.

[ (3) *Laroch.* 119. *Lac.* xi. 26. *Beauch.* i. 173.

them, flew to receive his benediction, and flocked in multitudes, full of confidence, singing Psalms and Litanies, to rejoin the army. Thirty-five thousand were speedily assembled, and the Royalist leaders lost no time in taking advantage of their enthusiasm to repair the late disaster. Bonchamps commanded the right, Cathelineau the centre, and d'Elbée the left, while Henri Larochejaquelein led the small but determined band of horsemen. On the following day they returned to Fontenay, where the Republicans, ten thousand strong, with forty pieces of cannon, were drawn up on the outside of the town to receive them. The Royalist army received absolution on their knees; and M. de Lescure addressed them in these words:—

“Let us advance, my sons; we have no powder; we can only retake the cannon with our staffs; Marie-Jeanne must be rescued; she will be the prize of the swiftest of foot amongst you.” The peasants answered with acclamations; but when they approached the Republican guns, the severity of the fire made the bravest hesitate. Upon this M. de Lescure advanced above thirty paces before his men, directly in front of a battery of six pieces, which was discharging grape with the utmost violence, stood there, took off his hat, exclaimed “Vive le Roi!” and slowly returned to the troops. His clothes were pierced, his spurs carried away, his boots torn, but he himself still unwounded. “My friends,” said he, “you see the Blues do not know how to fire.” This decided the peasants; they rushed forward with rapidity; but before they reached the battery a new incident arrested their course; they perceived on an eminence a cross, and the whole soldiers instantly fell on their knees, under the fire of the cannon. An officer wished to raise them, “Allow them,” said Lescure, “to pray to God, they will not fight the worse for it.” In effect, a moment after, the men sprung up, and rushed forward, armed with staffs, and the butt-end of their muskets, with such resolution, to the cannon mouths, that the artillery-men deserted them, and fled in confusion towards the town. Meanwhile, M. de Bouchamps, who had skilfully disposed his right wing in an oblique order, pushed forward with his men, and threw in so murderous a fire, at the distance of fifty paces, that on his side also the Republicans gave way, and the victory was complete. The victors and fugitives entered together into the town, headed by Lescure, who was the first man within the gates. No sooner was he there than he used all his efforts to save the vanquished, incessantly exclaiming, “Lay down your arms; quarter to the vanquished.” Forty pieces of cannon, several thousand muskets, ammunition, and stores in abundance, rewarded this the greatest triumph of the Royalist arms, who sustained no serious loss excepting that arising from a wound of Bonchamps, who was shot by a traitor to whom he had just given his life. It was not the least part of their success, in the estimation of the peasants, that they retook Marie-Jeanne, which was rescued from the Republicans by Foret, who with his own hand, slew two gendarmes who guarded it. The enthusiasm excited by the recovery of this favourite piece of artillery was unbounded. Filled with joy, the peasants threw themselves on their knees, embraced their favourite cannon, covered it with branches, flowers, and garlands, and themselves drew it into the market-place in Fontenay, preparatory to its removal to a place of security in the Bocage (1).

The royalists were much perplexed with the course to be pursued with

(1) Laroch. 122, 123, 125. Bonch. 33, 35. Lac. xii. 28, 29. Beauch. i. 175, 178, 179.

the prisoners. to the number of many thousands, who were now in their hands. To retain them in custody was impossible, for they had no fortified places; to follow the example of the Republicans, and murder them, out of the question. At length it was determined to shave their heads, and send them back to the Republicans; a resolution, the execution of which caused no small merriment to the soldiers. After the success at Fontenay, it was proposed to advance to Niort, where all the Republican troops of the neighbourhood were assembled; but the peasants returned so rapidly to their homes that it was found to be impossible. In four-and-twenty hours after the capture of the town, three-fourths of the army had returned to the Bocage, to recount their exploits to their agitated families. It was resolved therefore to withdraw from their conquest, which was an indefensible post, in the midst of a hostile territory, and in a few days the whole army re-entered the Bocage (1).

Meanwhile, equal success had attended the arms of the Vendéens in other quarters. Cathelineau, Stofflet, and Charrette, had defeated all the Republican bodies which attempted to penetrate into the parts of la Vendée where they commanded, and the latter had made himself master of the Isle of Noirmoutier. Successful combats took place at Vetiers and Doué, and Montreuil, which all tended to elevate the spirit of the troops; and it was at length resolved to unite all their forces for the attack of the important city of Saumur, where the Convention, who were now making the most vigorous efforts to check the insurrection, had collected twenty-two thousand regular troops, besides a great number of National Guards (2).

The Royalist army, forty thousand strong, approached Saumur on the 10th June. The Republican army had taken post in a fortified camp which surrounded the town. Their left rested on the heights in front of the old castle, their right on Saint-Florent, while formidable batteries lined all the intermediate space between these points. Field-works had been thrown up, and in many places redoubts completed, to strengthen their intrenched camp, which covered the whole space running through the heights from the broad and deep stream of the Thoué to the banks of the Loire. Sixteen thousand men, and nearly one hundred pieces of cannon, were assembled in that important post, which commanded one of the chief passages over that great river (3).

While the chiefs were deliberating about the best mode of attacking this formidable camp, the Vendéens of their own accord, engaged in the attack. Such was the ardour of the troops, in consequence of some successful skirmishes in which the advanced guard was engaged, that the whole army precipitated itself upon the town without waiting for the command of their leaders. This tumultuous assault, without any orders, was little calculated to ensure success; M. de Lescure was wounded; the sight of his blood, whom they believed invulnerable, shook the courage of the soldiers, and a charge of cuirassiers completed their disorder. The peasants, seeing that their balls could not pierce these steel-clad enemies, fled in confusion, and were only rallied by M. de Lescure behind some overturned waggons, which formed a barricade in the line of their flight. The

June 10.  
Their great  
Victory at  
Saumur.

(1) Beauch. i. 195, 196. Laroche. 127.

(2) Lac. xii. 30, 31. Jom. iii. 398. Beauch. i. 197, 222, 232.

(3) Beauch. i. 198, 199.

Royalist leaders, as well as the confusion would admit, now took measures to attack in regular form. Stofflet and Cathelineau directed their forces against the heights, and made a feint against the castle; while Lescure put himself at the head of the left wing to assault the bridge of Fouchard, and turn the redoubts of Bournan; and Henri de Larochejaquelein marched with his division towards the meadows of Varrins, to storm on that side the intrenched camp. While Lescure was rallying his men behind the waggons, Henri de Larochejaquelein assailed the Republican camp on the other side, where it was protected by a rampart and ditch. Finding that the soldiers hesitated to cross the fosse, he took off his hat, threw it into the ditch, and exclaiming "Who will get it for me?" plunged in himself, and was the first to seize it, followed by the soldiers, who now broke through in great numbers, escaladed the rampart, and entered the town. Followed by sixty foot-soldiers, he traversed the streets, crossed the bridges of the Loire, planted cannon on them to prevent the return of the Republicans, and pursued them for a considerable distance on the road to Tours. General Coustard, who commanded the Republicans on the heights of Bournan, was now cut off from all communication with the remainder of the army, and he took the bold resolution to enter Saumur, taking the victorious Royalists in rear. For this purpose, it was necessary to cross the bridge, where the Vendéens had established a battery, which commanded the passage. Coustard ordered a regiment of cuirassiers, supported by the volunteers of Orléans, to storm the battery. "Where are you sending us?" said the soldiers. "To death," replied Coustard; "the safety of the Republic requires it." The brave cuirassiers charged at the gallop, and carried the guns; but the Orléans volunteers disbanded under the fire, and they were forced to relinquish them to the Royalists. While these advantages were gained on their side, M. de Lescure had succeeded in rallying his soldiers, who, by falling on their faces when the artillery was discharged, succeeded in capturing the redoubts opposed to them, while Stofflet broke into the town, and completed the victory (1).

The trophies of the Vendéens in this great victory, by far more important than any yet gained over the Republicans by the Allied Sovereigns, were eighty pieces of cannon, ten thousand muskets, and eleven thousand prisoners, with the loss only of sixty men killed, and four hundred wounded. On the following day, the castle surrendered, with fourteen hundred men, and all the artillery which it contained, and gave them the command of both banks of the Loire. The Royalists shaved the heads of their prisoners, and sent them back to the Republicans on no other condition than that of not again serving against la Vendée; an illusory condition, speedily violated by the bad faith of their antagonists. This humanity was the more remarkable (2), as at this period the Republicans had already commenced their inhuman system of massacring their prisoners, and all taken in arms against the Convention.

Cathelineau  
created  
Commander-in-Chief.

After the capture of Saumur, the opinion of the Council of Generals was divided as to the course which they should pursue; but at length they were determined by the consideration of the great advantages of the possession of Nantes, which would open up a communication with England, and serve as a dépôt and base for future operations up the course of the Loire, and, in consequence, it was resolved to adopt this plan.

F (1) Lac. xii. 31, 32. Jom. iii. 396. Laroche, 137, 138, 141. Th. v. 50. Beauch. i. 204, 208.

(2) Laroche, 141. Lac. xii. 32, 33.

This resolution in the end proved fatal to the Royalist cause, by turning their Grand Army from the road to Paris, where it might have arrived, and stifled the Reign of Blood in its cradle, in the first moments of alarm, following the taking of Saumur; but it, nevertheless, was ably conceived, in a military point of view, as it was evident that the course of the Loire formed the line of the Royalist operations, and that Nantes was indispensable to their security. The day after the battle, M. Bonchamps arrived with his division, five thousand strong, while two noble young men, Charles Beaumont d'Autichamp, and the Prince of Talmont, also joined the Royalist cause; at the same time, the supreme command was given by the Council of Generals, to the peasant, Cathelineau; a striking proof of the disinterested magnanimity, which distinguished the noble chiefs of the army,—while, by a strange contrast, Biron, a peer of France, and son of a marshal, led the Republican forces (1).

M. Bonchamps, who was gifted with the true military genius, strongly urged a descent into Brittany, to obtain a communication with the ocean, and thereafter an immediate advance to Paris; and, if this plan could have been adopted, it might have led to incalculable results. But the other leaders, though brave and able men, were not equally penetrated with the necessity of striking at the decisive moment at the heart of their enemies; and, besides, great difficulty was anticipated, in prevailing on the peasants to undertake so distant an expedition, or believe that any thing could be required of them beyond the sight of their beloved Bocage. It was resolved, therefore, to descend the Loire to Nantes, in order to secure a firm footing on the sea-coast, and open a communication with England; after which, it was thought, more distant operations might, with more safety, be attempted (2).

The Royalists defeated in their attempt on Nantes. A garrison having been left in Saumur, to maintain the passage of the Loire, the Grand Army under Cathelineau, after occupying Angers, which was hastily abandoned by the Republicans, advanced towards Nantes, by the right bank of the river, while Charette, who had twenty thousand men under his command, was invited to co-operate in the attempt on the left. During the march, however, the ardour of the peasants was sensibly diminished; they had been long absent from home, and lamented the interruption of their agricultural labours; nor could any thing persuade them, that, after having gained so many victories, it was necessary to attempt the reduction of so distant a place as Nantes. Great numbers left their colours, and returned to their fields; and when the main army approached that city, it hardly amounted to ten thousand combatants. The hour of attack was 29th June. fixed at two o'clock on the morning of the 29th June; and Charette, on his side, commenced the assault at that hour; but the army of Cathelineau having been detained ten hours before the little town of Niort, did not arrive till ten. They were there arrested by a few hundred of the National Guard, who fought with heroic valour. Notwithstanding this delay, the united forces commenced the attack with great vigour, and Cathelineau had actually penetrated, at the head of the bravest of his troops, into the town, when on the Place Viarmis, he was severely wounded by a ball in the breast. The peasants, in despair, carried him out of the town, and abandoned all the advantages they had gained; and although the combat continued for eighteen

(1) Lac. xii. 125. Beauch. i. 210—212, 215, 219.  
Th. v. 50. Jom. iii. 397, 399.

(2) Th. v. 66, 67.

hours, the want of a leader rendered the courage of the soldiers of no avail, and the enterprise failed (1).

This check proved extremely prejudicial to the Vendéen cause. The army was dissolved in an instant. The brave Cathelineau was disabled by his wound; officers, soldiers, hastily threw themselves into boats and recrossed the Loire; the right bank was entirely deserted, and the men in groups of twenty and thirty straggled homewards. After an interval of a fortnight, Cathelineau expired of his wound, to the inexpressible regret of both the chiefs and soldiers, and carried with him to the grave the best hopes of the re-  
July 14. estab-  
 lishment of the Royalist cause. The death of the commander was announced by a peasant to the anxious group who surrounded the house where he breathed his last, in these simple words :—"The good Cathelineau has restored his spirit to Him who gave it, to avenge his glory (2)."

While these events were in progress on the side of Nantes, a formidable invasion by disciplined troops and able generals was defeated in the Bocage. Westermann, the celebrated chief of the insurgents, on the 10th August, having organized what he called a German Legion, from soldiers trained in the regular wars on the Rhenish frontier, and entertaining the most supreme contempt for the insurgents, penetrated, during the absence of the Grand Army of the Royalists at Nantes, into the heart of la Vendée. He made himself master in the first instance of Parthenay and Amaillou, which he reduced to  
June 20. ashes, and burnt Clisson, the chateau of M. de Lescure. The leaders fled to Châtillon, where the Supreme Royalist Council was assembled; but  
July 3. this last refuge was soon after invaded by Westermann, who burnt to the ground the castle of La Darbellière, the domain of M. de Larochejaquelein. But here terminated the success of this rash enterprise. M. de Lescure had apprised the other chiefs of the danger, who were now advancing by forced marches to his aid. Stofflet and Bonchamps arrived with their divisions, while the tocsin roused the inhabitants of the surrounding parishes; and an able attack directed by Lescure, who was perfectly acquainted with the country, proved completely successful. In little more than an hour, two-thirds of Westermann's army were destroyed; and the fugitives who escaped, owed their salvation to the humanity of the very general whose château they had just burned. Westermann, with the utmost difficulty, escaped out of the Bocage, with a few followers, and was in the end sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and perished on the scaffold (3).

After Cathelineau's death, M. d'Elbée was appointed generalissimo, and the utmost efforts of all the chiefs exerted to reassemble the army. Such was the disinterestedness of the other leaders, that Bonchamps, qualified above all others for the situation, made his own officers vote for his rival. Meanwhile, Biron, having collected fifty thousand troops, commenced a regular invasion of the Bocage in four divisions, extending from the Loire to the Sèvre. This invasion was at first attended with success: the Royalists, with twenty-five thousand men, attacked General Labarollière, who, with fifteen thousand, was established at Martigné-Briant; but after an obstinate engagement, they  
Aug. 13. were defeated, and retired to Coron. Thither they were pursued by Santerre, who deemed himself now secure of conquest: but a dreadful reverse awaited them. The tocsin was sounded in all the parishes; the Curate of

(1) Lac. xii. 127. Laroche. 153, 155. Th. v. 69, 70. Beauch. i. 238—248.

(2) Laroche. 156, 174. Beauch. i. 252, 253.

(3) Th. v. 121, 122. Beauch. i. 257—264.



St.-Laud, who eminently distinguished himself in the war, collected all the forces of the neighbouring districts; and on the 17th the Republicans were attacked, while marching in column on the highroad, in front and flank at the same time, and driven back in the utmost disorder towards Saumur, and Chinon, with the loss of ten thousand men, and all their artillery, baggage, and ammunition (1).

Aug. 13. Soon after, M. d'Elbée, with Charette, attacked a corps of fifteen thousand men at Luçon; but although success at first attended the Royalists, they were ultimately defeated, with the loss of fifteen hundred men and eighteen pieces of cannon; the greatest disaster experienced since the commencement of the war. It was chiefly owing to having followed, on M. Lescure's advice, a plan of attack, which, though admirably adapted for regular troops, was not suited to the desultory and impetuous mode of warfare adopted by the peasantry. The whole artillery of the Royalists would have fallen into the hands of the Republicans, had not Larochejaquelein, at the head of sixty of the bravest of his followers, by prodigies of valour, arrested the pursuit at the bridge of Dissay (2).

General Invasion of the Bocage on all sides. Encouraged by this success, the armies of the Convention, now greatly reinforced by the efforts of the Government, on all sides invaded the Bocage. Santerre, fatally celebrated in the Revolution, advanced at the head of powerful bodies of regular soldiers; Chantonnay was occupied, and the country wherever they penetrated, devastated with fire and sword; even the farm-houses and the mills were consumed, in obedience to the orders of the Convention. But a severe retribution was awaiting them. The Royalists sounded the tocsin in all the parishes, and having reassembled the peasants, made a combined and skilful attack on the Republican force Sept. 6. seven thousand strong, in the neighbourhood of Chantonnay. It proved completely successful, chiefly in consequence of the valour of the division of Bonchamps, which, not having shared in the preceding reverses, had preserved all its wonted enthusiasm; the Republicans were routed, with the loss of all their artillery and baggage; and such was the carnage, that scarce eighteen hundred could be reassembled after the battle, and Santerre himself narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy (3). At the same time Charette maintained an obstinate contest in Lower la Vendée; and though frequently defeated, never suffered himself to be discouraged by his reverses, and destroyed several Republican columns that endeavoured to penetrate into his district,

Arrival of the Garrison of Mayence. But the Convention, which was at last wakened to a full sense of the danger of the war, were now collecting forces on all sides to crush the insurgents. The garrison of Mayence, fourteen thousand strong, commanded by Kléber, and which the Allies, with culpable negligence, had not made prisoners of war, and only bound not to combat the Allies for a year, was despatched by post to the scene of action; and great part of the garrisons of Valenciennes and Condé, which had been restored on the same condition, soon followed in the same direction. Not only the National Guards, but the *levée en masse* of the neighbouring departments, were assembled; and before the middle of September, upwards of 200,000 men surrounded la Vendée on all sides; and by a simultaneous advance, threat-

(1) Jom. iii. 406, 401. Beauch. i. 278, 288, 297.  
(2) Laroche. i. 194. Jom. iv. 280.

(3) Jom. iii. 247, 402. Laroche. 195. Beauch. ii. 7. Lac. xii. 129.

ened to crush its revolt. To oppose this formidable invasion, the Royalists were divided into four divisions, that in the neighbourhood of Nantes under the command of Charette, that on the banks of the Loire under Bonchamps; M. de Larochejaquelein in Anjou, and M. de Lescure in Eastern Poitou, while d'Elbée retained the supreme command (1).

Able design of Bonchamps, which is not adopted The plan which Bonchamps strenuously recommended, and which bears the marks of great military genius, was to allow the enemy to penetrate, in detached columns, into the Bocage; to overwhelm them successively by a junction of the Royalist forces in that district, who occupied a central position, and to take advantage of the first moment of alarm, cross the Loire, rouse the Royalist population of Brittany, and nourish the war from the resources of an hitherto untouched country. "What fortunate accident," said he, has made us acquainted with the designs of the enemy? In it I see clearly the hand of God for the safety of la Vendée. The Republicans have at length discovered the secret of our victories; they wish to concentrate their forces to overwhelm us by their mass. We may, indeed, repulse the army of Mayence; but will it not return to the charge, with accumulated numbers and resistless force? Let us then anticipate the enemy. Brittany calls us; let us march and extend our destinies. Let us no longer be deceived by the hope that the Coalesced Powers will restore the monarchy; that glory is reserved for us alone. Masters of a harbour on the ocean, we will find the Princes Royal at our head, and we will at length acquire that political consistence (2), without which we cannot hope for durable success." D'Elbée combated the latter part of the project as too hazardous in the irregular state of the army; and, after a long discussion, it was resolved to remain on the defensive in la Vendée.

Defeat of the Republicans at Torfou. It was the army of Charette which first found itself assailed by the immense forces of the Republicans. The Vendéens were there attacked by the redoubtable garrison of Mayence, which crossed the Loire, and invaded the country on the 10th September. The Royalists were defeated in several encounters, and driven back by this invasion. Bonchamps was defeated near the rocks of Érigny, while Lescure experienced a check at Thouars, and the whole Lower Poitou was wasted with fire and sword, notwithstanding the utmost exertions of Charette. The successive retreat of these columns, however, brought the Royalist forces nearer each other; and a simultaneous effort was made by all their forces. D'Elbée, and Bonchamps, who had now recovered from his wound, having united thirty thousand men, and the army having received the benediction of the Curate of St.-Laud, and heard high mass at midnight, they attacked the Republicans at daybreak on the 19th 19th Sept. September. The Royalists were forty thousand strong; the Republicans somewhat less numerous, but they embraced the garrison of Mayence, the best soldiers in France. All the chiefs felt that this invasion must, at all hazards, be repelled, and that the moment had arrived, when they must conquer or die. Charette, certain of the co-operation of the other generals, had arranged his forces in order of battle, blocking up the road to Torfou. His defeated and discouraged troops, however, could not long withstand the shock of the veterans of Kléber; they were broken, and falling into confusion, when M. de Lescure, seeing affairs wellnigh desperate, exclaimed—

(1) Jom. iii. 300. Laroch. 197, 200. Beauch. ii. 21, and i. 313.

(2) Jom. iv. 300. Beauch. ii. 26, 27. Laroch. 199.

"Are there not four hundred men brave enough to die with me?" The peasants of the parish of Echanbroignes, seventeen hundred strong, answered him with shouts, and this feeble division withstood the shock of the Republican forces for two hours, till the division of Bonchamps arrived. This reinforcement speedily changed the face of affairs; the peasants, dispersed in single file, behind the hedges which enveloped the Republicans, kept up a murderous fire on every side; the cannon were carried by assault, and the whole army thrown into confusion. Nothing but the heroic devotion of Colonel Chouardin, and his regiment, who maintained the bridge of Boussay, and suffered themselves to be wholly destroyed before they abandoned it, preserved the invading army from total destruction (1).

Still the Royalists had not a moment to lose; it was indispensable to attack immediately the corps of General Beysser, which was on the point of effecting a junction with the forces of Kléber. On the day after their victory at Torfou, they surprised him at Montaigu, and routed the Republicans entirely, with the loss of all their artillery, baggage, and ammunition. This was followed by the surprise and total defeat of General Mukinski at St.-Fulgent, by Charette and Lescure, while, on the very same day, Bonchamps and d'Elbée assailed the retreating columns of General Kléber, encumbered with twelve hundred chariots, and after throwing them into confusion, captured a large portion of their baggage; but this success, though considerable, was nothing to what would have been obtained, had the whole Royalist forces been united, as they should have been, against the formidable bands of Mayence (2).

In other quarters the Vendéens were equally successful. General Rossignol, with fifteen thousand men, indeed, defeated an ill-concerted attack of the Royalist chiefs, Talmont and Autichamp; but having, after this success, advanced with Santerre to Coron, he was there attacked by Piron and Larochejaquelein, who had succeeded in rousing all the population in the neighbouring parishes; and with such skill were the Royalist operations conducted; that the Republican army was pierced in the centre, and entirely dispersed, twenty-four pieces of cannon, and all their ammunition taken. Immediately after this success, a detachment of the Royalist forces were despatched against General Duhoux, who had crossed Pont-de-Cé, and was driving the Vendéen detachments before him; but no sooner had he arrived at the heights of St.-Lambert, than he was assailed by the bulk of the Royalist forces, while Bernier, a farmer's servant in the parish of St.-Lambert, swam across the river, and attacked them in rear with the armed peasants in his vicinity. The rout soon was complete; all the artillery of the invaders was taken, and their column, nine thousand strong, totally destroyed. Such was the terror produced by these defeats, that the *levée en masse* assembled between Tours and Poitiers, dispersed without striking a blow, and the regular forces of the Republicans, on all sides, quitted the Vendéen territory (3).

Thus, by a series of most brilliant military combinations, seconded by the most heroic exertions on the part of the peasants, was the invasion of six armies, amounting to 100,000 regular troops, part

(1) Jom. iv. 302, 303. Laroch. 213, 214. Beauch. ii. 34-41.

(2) Laroch. 215, 217. Jom. iv. 303, 304. Beauch. ii. 42-44.

(3) Jom. iv. 304-307. Laroch. 202-210. Beauch. ii. 28-32.

of whom were the best soldiers of France, defeated, and losses inflicted on the Republicans, incomparably greater than they had suffered from all the Allies put together since the commencement of the war; a striking proof of the admirable skill with which their chiefs had availed themselves of their central position and peculiar mode of fighting to crush the invading forces, and a memorable instance of what can be effected by resolute men, even without the advantages of regular organization, if ably conducted, against the most formidable superiority of military force.

But the Vendéens had to contend with a redoubtable adversary, and unfortunately the invading army, from which most was to be apprehended, was that which had suffered least from their attacks. The Convention made the most vigorous efforts to meet the danger. Barrère, in a report to the Convention, declared "The inexplicable la Vendée still exists; twenty times since this rebellion broke out have your representatives, your generals, the committee itself, declared that it was stifled, and yet it exists more formidable than ever. We thought we could destroy it; the tocsin sounded in all the neighbouring departments; a prodigious number of armed citizens were assembled to crush the insurrection; and a sudden panic has dissolved the whole like a cloud. You must change your system; one despotic chief must head your armies; a term must be put to the existence of the brigands. Like the Giant in the fable, which was no longer invincible but when he touched the earth, you must sever them from their native soil before you can destroy them." In pursuance of this suggestion, General Léchelle was appointed Generalissimo; the Brest fleet was ordered to sail to co-operate with the armies; and a proclamation was addressed to the troops, enjoining them to exterminate the Vendéens before the 20th of October (1).

Meanwhile the peasants, as usual, seeing the present danger over, returned to their homes; the standards of the generals were almost deserted. *Te Deum* was sung in all the parishes, amidst the joyful acclamations of the inhabitants. M. de Lescure, at the ceremony in his own parish church, knelt behind a column to withdraw himself from the admiring gaze of his countrymen. On learning the massacres which the Republicans were making of their countrymen who had been made prisoners, and which were commanded by the decrees of the Convention, forbidding them to give quarter, the Royalist soldiers loudly demanded reprisals upon the numerous captives who were in their hands; but the leaders expressed such horror at the proposal, that they always succeeded in preventing it from being carried into effect. The formidable bands of Mayence, at this time, were so much disgusted with the savage proceedings of the Convention, that they offered, if their pay was guaranteed, to join themselves in a body to the Royalist cause; but the large sum required for this purpose, amounting to 400,000 francs, joined to the suspicions of the Royalists that some treachery was intended, rendered a design abortive, which, if executed, would have given a decisive preponderance to the Vendéen forces (2).

Unfortunately at this time, when their enemies were concentrating under one able hand, the whole of the Vendéen war, the Royalist chiefs, divided about the points to which their forces should be directed, separated their troops, Charette drawing off towards the island of

(1) Jom. iv. 308, 309. Beauch. ii. 56, 57. Laroch. (2) Beauch. ii. 50—52, 66. Laroch. 218, 219. 218.

Noirmoutiers, while Lescure and Beaurepaire took post near Châtillon to make head against Westermann, who was advancing with a powerful force, massacring, without distinction, all the inhabitants, and burning every edifice that his soldiers could reach. Lescure, Stofflet, and Larochejaquelin, united, had only six thousand men at Moulins and Chêvres, a little in front of Châtillon, where they were attacked by a column of twenty-five thousand Republicans under Westermann; the superiority of his force was such, that October 7. he drove them into the town, which was speedily captured by his forces; but their success was of short duration; Bonchamps and Larochejaquelin having roused the peasantry, and reassembled the whole grand army, two days after made a general attack upon the Republicans, totally defeated them, and drove them out of Châtillon, with the loss of above ten thousand men and all their artillery. During the rout, Westermann, who saw that the Royalists in Châtillon were almost all drunk, and kept no look-out, conceived the bold design of re-entering the town, and cutting to pieces its garrison. This project was completely successful. Taking an hundred intrepid hus- October 12. sars, with a grenadier mounted behind each man, he returned at midnight to Châtillon, where the Vendéens, as usual, had placed no sentinels, broke into the streets, cut down great numbers of the Royalists, who, between sleep and intoxication, were incapable of making any resistance, set fire to the town, and after a scene of unequalled horror and blood, withdrew before daylight in the morning (1).

French In-  
vasion by  
the Repub-  
licans. Hardly was this invasion repulsed, when the Vendéens were called on to make head against a more formidable enemy in another quarter. The redoubtable bands of Mayence, reinforced by several other divisions, in all forty thousand strong, were advancing into the very heart of the country, and had already nearly reached Cholet, while the unhappy divisions of the Vendéen chiefs detained in other quarters a October 14. large proportion of their forces. Notwithstanding the most urgent representations from the other leaders, Charette persisted in his system of separate operations, and wasted his force in a fruitless expedition to the Isle of Noirmoutiers. Lescure and Bonchamps, however, hastened to support M. de Royrand, who was flying before the invaders. It was arranged that the former should await the enemy in front, while the latter should, by a circuitous route, assail them in flank. But the Republicans having advanced more slowly than was expected, Lescure came up with them before Bonchamps was ready to support him, and though they yielded in the first instance to the furious attack of the Vendéens, yet the inferiority of their force, and a desperate charge in flank made by Beaupuy when dis- Royalists  
Defeated,  
and M. de  
Lescure  
mortally  
wounded. ordered by success, threw them into confusion, and they fell back to Beaupréau, while the Republicans bivouacked on the field of battle. The next day the victorious army entered Cholet, which the discouraged Vendéens could not be prevailed on to defend. The Royalist loss was not severe; but they sustained an irreparable misfortune in a wound of M. Lescure, who was shot through the head when leading on his men, as usual, at the commencement of the action. The wound proved mortal after several weeks of suffering, which he endured with the heroism and sweetness of his character (2).

(1) Jom. iv. 312, 313. Laroche. 221, 227—229. Beauch. ii. 58, 61, 73—75.

(2) Jom. iv. 314. Laroche. 229, 230. Beauch. ii. 75, 78—83.

The Vendéens were cruelly discouraged by this disaster : the more so, as the enemy's columns had now penetrated the country in every direction, and the ravages they had committed gave no hope of maintaining the contest longer in their native land. It was resolved, therefore, to cross the Loire, and carry the war into Brittany ; but, previous to this, it was deemed advisable by all the chiefs to make one desperate effort to crush the invading force in the neighbourhood of Cholet. The action took place two days after, and was contested with the utmost fury on both sides. The forces were nearly equal, the Royalists having forty thousand men, and the Republicans forty-one thousand ; but the latter were greatly superior in their artillery, which consisted of thirty pieces, and cavalry, which amounted to three thousand men, and the infantry included the best troops in France (1). The combat was felt on both sides to be what in effect proved decisive of the fate of the war (1).

Battle of  
Cholet.

October 17.

At three in the morning on the 17th October, the sound of artillery awakened the army, and the soldiers hastened to hear grand mass from the curate of the village where the head-quarters were placed. The ceremony was performed by torchlight ; the priest, in fervid and eloquent terms, besought them to combat courageously for their God, their King, and their children, and concluded by giving absolution to the armed multitude. The darkness of the scene, and the discharges of cannon which interrupted his discourse, filled all hearts with a gloomy presentiment of the disasters which were about to follow. The Republicans were drawn up in three divisions, the garrison of Mayence, with the cavalry, forming the reserve. On the Royalist side, Stofflet commanded the left, d'Elbée and Bonchamps the centre, and Larochejaquelein the right (2).

The action commenced at ten o'clock. On this occasion the Vendéens marched for the first time in close column, like troops of the line, but they had no artillery. Henri de Larochejaquelein and Stofflet, after a short exchange of bullets, precipitated themselves on the centre of the enemy, routed it by the vehemence of their attack, and drove it back in disorder into the town of Cholet, where the great park of artillery was captured. The battle seemed to be lost, and the Republicans, panic-struck by the furious onset of their enemies, were flying on all sides, when Léchelle, as a last resource, ordered his cavalry to charge, and the reserve, composed of the garrison of Mayence, to advance. The charge of horse took place from right to left through the whole Royalist army, now disordered by the rapidity of their attack, and at the same time the iron bands of Mayence emerged through the fugitives, and checked the pursuit of the victors. In an instant the face of the action was changed ; the Vendéens, seized with a sudden panic, fled on all sides, and the exultation of victory was succeeded by the terrors of defeat. In this extremity, Henri de Larochejaquelein, d'Elbée, and Bonchamps, collected two hundred of the bravest of their troops, and by their heroic resistance not only gave time to the Royalists to escape, but drove back the victorious squadrons of the enemy ; but their valour proved fatal to the two latter, who were mortally wounded in the middle of the charge. Larochejaquelein, with great difficulty, collected five thousand men, with which he carried off the wounded remains of his

Royalists  
defeated,  
and d'Elbée  
and Bon-  
champs mor-  
tally wounded.

(1) Jom. iv. 315. Beauch. ii. 84, 85. Lac. xi. 137.

(2) Jom. iv. 316. Beauch. ii. 85—87. Larochejaquelein.

gallant comrades to Beaupréau, where they passed the night ; while the remainder of the army fled towards the Loire, and without any orders commenced the passage of the river (1).

This defeat proved highly injurious to the Vendéen cause ; not only by the confusion and depression which it had occasioned among the troops, but the irreparable loss which they sustained in the two most distinguished of their generals. The gallant Bonchamps was carried by his weeping soldiers to St.-Florent, where the Vendéens, worked up to madness by the conflagration of all their towns, and the massacre of their families, demanded, with loud cries, the immediate destruction of five thousand prisoners who were confined in the town. The intelligence of the wound of Bonchamps, redoubled their fury, and nothing seemed capable of saving the unhappy captives. Already the cannon, loaded with grape-shot, were turned on the helpless crowd of captives, whose destruction to all appearance was inevitable. Mean-

Humanity of  
Bonchamps  
to the Pri-  
soners.

while, the officers of his army, on their knees, by his bedside, awaited with trembling anxiety the report of the surgeon ; their downcast and weeping countenances soon told him that there was no hope ; while the cries of the soldiers from without announced the imminent peril of the prisoners. Instantly Bonchamps seized d'Autichamp, who knelt beside his couch, by the hand, and besought him immediately to fly and convey to the soldiers his last orders to save the captives. He quickly ran to fulfil the humane mission, but the soldiers were in such a state of exasperation that nothing but the announcement of Bonchamps' entreaties could arrest the uplifted arm of destruction. At length, however, they listened to his entreaties ; the guns were turned aside, and the prisoners saved. Meanwhile, Bonchamps gave with calmness his last orders, and especially commanded that the lives of all the captives should be saved ; several times before he expired he anxiously enquired whether this had been done, and expressed the utmost satisfaction when he was informed that they were secure. He was fortunate enough to receive the last consolations of religion from two venerable ecclesiastics, who soothed his dying hours by the promises granted to devotion and humanity : " Yes," said he, " I dare to hope for the divine mercy ; I have not acted from pride, or the desire of a glory which perishes in eternity ; I have tried only to overturn the rule of impiety and blood (2) ; I have not been able to restore the throne, but I have at least defended the cause of God, my King, and my country ; and He has in mercy enabled me to pardon"—Here the voice of the hero failed, and he expired amidst the sobs of all who witnessed the scene.

Atrocious  
Cruelty of  
the Repub-  
licans.

While the last moments of the Royalist chief were ennobled by an act of mercy, the triumph of the Republicans was stained by unrelenting and uncalled for cruelty. The towns of Beaupréau and Cholet were burnt to the ground ; the inhabitants of every age and sex put to the sword, and the trophies of victory reared on the blood-soaked ruins of their murdered countrymen's dwellings. " The National Convention," said the Representatives, Bourbotte and Turreau, in their report to the Assembly, " have decreed that the war in la Vendée should be concluded by the end of October ; and we may now say with truth that la Vendée no longer exists. A profound solitude reigns in the country recently occupied by the rebels ;

(1) Jom. iv. 316. Laroch. 236, 237. Beauch. ii. 36—91. Bonch. 49. Lac. xi. 137.

(2) Bonch. 52, 53. Laroch. 241. Beauch. ii. 96, 97.

you may travel far in those districts without meeting either a living creature or a dwelling; for, with the exception of Cholet, Saint-Florent, and some little towns, where the number of patriots exceeds that of the Royalists, we have left behind us nothing but ashes and piles of dead (1)."

*Dreadful  
Passage of  
the Loire.*

Meanwhile, the whole Vendéen forces, with the exception of those under Charette, flocked to Saint-Florent, with the design of hastening over the Loire. No words can do justice to the horrors of the scene which presented itself: eighty thousand persons, of whom little more than one-half were armed, filled the semi-circular valley, which extends from the base of the heights of Saint-Florent to the margin of the river. Soldiers, women, 18th Oct. children, old men, were crowded together, flying in consternation from their burning villages, the smoke of which darkened the air behind them, while in front extended the broad surface of the Loire, with a few barks only to ferry over the helpless multitude. In the midst of the tumult, and while the air resounded with the cries of the fugitives, every one sought his children, his parents, or his defenders; and, crowding to the shore, stretched out their arms to the opposite bank, as if, when it was reached, a period would be put to all their sufferings. So terrible was the spectacle, so vehement the agitation of the multitude, that numbers compared it to the awful spectacle which awaits the world at the day of judgment (2).

The generals were at first in despair at the sight of the crowd of fugitives who surrounded the army; and the utter confusion into which all ranks were thrown by the panic; a feeling which was much increased by the death of Bonchamps, who alone was acquainted with the opposite shore, and had always supported the passage of the river. But finding it in vain to stem the torrent, they made the best disposition of which the circumstances would admit, to effect the passage of the army; and with such skill were the arrangements made, that although there only twenty-five frail barks to transport so great a multitude, the whole were ferried over, with all their baggage, without any loss, and before the advanced posts of the Republicans had yet reached Saint-Florent (3). On the day following, Westermann and the foremost of the Republicans came up to St.-Florent in time to witness the last detachments of the Vendéens cross to the opposite shore, and vented their disappointment by devastating with fire and sword the unhappy country which they had abandoned.

*The Royal-  
ists enter  
Brittany.*

No sooner were the Vendéens in Brittany, than they made choice of Henri de Larochejaquelein to be their commander, in the room of d'Elbée, who was utterly disabled by wounds, and on the recommendation of M. Lescure, who was yet lingering on the bed of death. "Could a miracle restore me to life," said that generous warrior with a feeble voice, when on his deathbed, "I could form no wish but to be his aid-de-camp." Much had been gained by effecting the passage; but though the troops were still numerous, they were far from being in a condition to undertake active operations. Disheartened by defeat, exiled from their country, overwhelmed with a useless multitude of women and children, who followed their steps, the soldiers were very different from the ardent and impetuous bands, who at Saumur and Torfou had carried terror into the Republican ranks. They were no longer in their own parishes; their mode of fighting was ill adapted for an open

(1) *Guerres des Vend.* ii. 287. *Jom.* iv. 318.

(2) *Laroch.* 239, 240. *Beauch.* ii. 99, 100.

(3) *Jom.* iv. 319. *Laroch.* 239—241. *Beauch.* ii. 102—104.



country, where artillery and cavalry constituted the principal weapons of war; they had no magazines or ammunition, and they had to repair the consequences of a recent and bloody defeat. What then must have been the skill of the generals, what the valour of the soldiers, who could still, even amidst such disastrous circumstances, again chain victory to their standards, and gain such ascendancy over their enemies, that but for the invincible repugnance of the troops to leave the vicinity of their homes, they might have marched to Paris itself (1)!

Opinions were divided as to the course which the army should now pursue. M. de Lescure strongly recommended that they should advance, before they were weakened by any farther losses, to Nantes, in order both to secure a dépôt for the army, open a communication with England, and place the unarmed crowd of women and children in a place of safety (2); and it would have been well for the Royalist cause if this advice had been adopted. But the Prince of Talmont strongly urged an advance towards Rennes, where an insurrection was expected to break out, and his advice was adopted.

21d Oct. The army advanced successively to Ingrande, and Château-Gonthier, the garrisons of which were easily routed. At Laval, nine thousand National Guards disputed the entrance of the town, but Larochejaquelein carried it by assault, and dispersed the enemy (3). Meanwhile, General Léchelle, and the Convention, who flattered themselves that the insurrection was crushed by the victory of Cholet, were beyond measure astonished by the discovery, that the Royalists had crossed the river without loss, and were

Battle of in a situation menacing alike to Angers and Nantes. After much  
Château- hesitation, it was resolved to divide the army into two columns  
Gonthier. the one of which was to cross at Nantes, and the other by Pont-de-Cé, and unite for the pursuit of the Royal army. Léchelle came up with them while still occupying the town of Laval; and dividing his army into two columns, commenced an attack. Larochejaquelein flew through the ranks, and addressed these energetic words to his soldiers:—"To efface now the remembrance of your former defeats is the only salvation that remains to you. On your arms now depend not only your own lives, and those of your wives and children, but the throne of France, and the altars of God. Let us then advance to victory; the Bretons extend their arms to receive you; they will aid us to reconquer our hearths; but now we must conquer; a defeat would be irreparable ruin." Lescure insisted upon being carried in a litter through the ranks, and sharing in the dangers that awaited them. Animated

25th Oct. by these examples, the Royalists advanced to the encounter in close columns. By a vigorous charge at the head of a small body of horse, Stofflet made himself master of some pieces of cannon, which he immediately turned against the enemy; Larochejaquelein and Royrand pressed them severely in front, while another column, headed by Dehargues, turned their flank, and attacked them in rear. The Vendéens had to deal with the redoubtable garrison of Mayence, but they fought with the courage of despair, and on no former occasion had exhibited a more enthusiastic valour. After a desperate struggle, the Republicans began to give way; they were pursued with loud shouts by the Royalists as far as Château-Gonthier, where a battery of cannon for a moment arrested their progress; but Larochejaquelein threw

(1) Jom. iv. 32. Beauch. ii. 108, 109.

(3) Jom. iv. 321. Laroche. 257. Beauch. ii. 117.

(2) Jom. iv. 321. Laroche. 249. Beauch. ii. 110, 111.

himself on the guns, carried them, and pursued the enemy through the town with great slaughter. On reaching the open country, on the opposite side, they dispersed, and, with great difficulty, and in utter confusion, by diverging lines, reached the towns of Rennes and Nantes. In this battle, the garrison of Mayence, which had inflicted such losses on the Vendéens, was almost entirely destroyed; the total loss of the Republicans was twelve thousand men, and nineteen pieces of cannon; and of their whole army, scarce seven thousand could be rallied at Angers after the action. General Léchelle was so overwhelmed by the disaster, that he resigned the command in despair, and retired to Tours, where anxiety and chagrin soon brought him to an untimely end (1).

On the day when this astonishing victory was gained, Barrère announced the extinction of the war of la Vendée, in the Convention, in the following terms:—"La Vendée is no more. Montaigu and Cholet are in our power; the brigands are everywhere exterminated; a profound solitude reigns in the Bocage, covered with cinders and watered with tears. The death of Bonchamps alone is equivalent to a victory." Abandoning themselves to the most tumultuous joy at this intelligence, the people danced in all the public places, of Paris, and everywhere the exclamation was heard, "La Vendée is no more." It may be conceived, then, what was the public consternation when, a few days after, it was discovered that the Republican army was dispersed, and that nothing remained to prevent the advance of the Royalists to the capital (2)!

Desperate  
state of the  
Republicans  
after their  
Defeat. This glorious victory restored at once the Vendéen cause: the remains of the Republican army had fled in different directions to Rennes, Angers, and Nantes, and nothing remained to prevent the Royalists from marching either to Paris, Nantes, or Alençon. General Lenoir, in his report to the Convention, declared, "The rebels may now drive us before them to Paris, if they choose." Unfortunately they were led by the hopes of succours from England to direct their march to the coast, and thus lost the moment of decisive success. After remaining ten days at Laval, to restore some degree of order in the army, they advanced to Fougères, in the hope of being reinforced by recruits from Brittany, and of drawing nearer the expected aid from Great-Britain. Here two emigrants arrived with dispatches from the British Government, which, after protesting the desire of England, to aid them, and recommending Granville as the point of debarkation, promised succour, on their arrival at that port (3). This offer removed every hesitation as to their plans; the prospect of obtaining a seaport town, defended by fortifications, where they could at once deposit in a place of safety the crowd of helpless mouths, which encumbered the army, obtain a firm footing for their stores, and open a direct communication with the powerful allies who seemed to be advancing to their assistance; dispelled every doubt. They determined, in consequence, to march to Granville, and despatched an answer by the British envoy, in which, after expressing their intentions, and explaining their wants, they entreated that a Prince of the Blood might be sent to assume the command, and terminate the divisions which already began to paralyze their movements (4).

(1) *Jom. iv. 322, 326, 330. Laroch. 262—264. Kléber, Guerres des Vend. ii. 305, 306. Beauch. ii. 120, 123—130.*

(2) *Beauch. ii. 132—134.*

(3) *Laroch. 281. Jom. iv. 327, 328. Beauch. ii. 138. Guerres des Vend. ii. 327.*

(4) *Jom. iv. 329, Laroch. 281. Beauch. ii. 132—155.*

Meanwhile, the Republicans did every thing in their power to repair the disaster; and while Kléber laboured assiduously at Angers to reorganize his army, the Convention issued a bloody decree, in which they ordered, that  
 Nov. 1. "Every city which should receive the rebels, give them succour, or fail to repel them with all the means in their power, should be treated as a city in revolt, razed to the ground, and the whole property of the inhabitants confiscated to the Republic (1)." Fortunately the weakness of their arms on the right bank of the Loire prevented this decree from being generally carried into execution.

At Fougères the army sustained an irreparable loss by the death  
 of M. Lescure, who sunk at length under the consequences of the wound he had received at the battle of Cholet, and the protracted suffering and anxiety which he had since undergone. He awaited the approach of death with his usual serenity. "Open the windows," said he to his wife, who was watching by his bed-side; is it clear?"—"Yes," said she, "the sun is shining."—"I have then," replied the dying general, "a veil before my eyes: I always thought that my wound was mortal: I have no longer any doubt of it. My dearest, I am about to leave you; that is my sole regret, and that I have not been able to replace the King upon the throne. I leave you in the midst of a civil war, with a helpless infant, and another in your bosom; that is what distresses me. For myself I have no fears; I have often seen death before me, and it has no terrors: I hope to go to Heaven. It is you alone that I regret," and here his eyes filled with tears; "I hoped to have made you happy. Forgive me now, if ever I have caused you distress; and console yourself with thinking that I shall be in Heaven; I carry with me the blessed presentiment that the Almighty will watch over your days." He soon after breathed his last, while a smile of benevolence still lingered on his features; and the pious care of his relations committed him to the earth, in an unknown place of sepulture, where his body was preserved from the insults which the fury of the Republicans would have inflicted on his remains (2).

The Vendéens having at length recovered from their fatigues, advanced slowly to Granville, which they surrounded with thirty thousand combatants.

Nov. 14. Their march had been so much delayed by their incumbrances, that no hope remained of surprising the place, and the want of  
 The Royalists repulsed at Granville. heavy artillery precluded the possibility of breaching its ramparts.

It was therefore resolved to attempt an escalade, for the English succours had not arrived, and the circumstances of the army rendered immediate success indispensable. After scaling ladders were prepared, and the Royalists, after having in vain summoned the place, advanced to the assault, such was the ardour of the soldiers that they not only made themselves masters of the suburbs, but rushed into the outworks, and some of the bravest even mounted the rampart, suppling the want of scaling ladders by their bayonets, which they stuck into the crevices of the walls. The garrison, panic-struck, were flying from the top, when a deserter exclaimed,—“Treason, we are betrayed!” and the impetuous crowd, yielding to the impulse, precipitated themselves back into the ditch. The attack continued, but, not having been preceded by any reconnoissance, and carried on in utter ignorance of the works, it took place on the least accessible front, and where the assailants were exposed to a severe flanking fire from the armed vessels in

(1) *Guerres des Vend.* ii. 321.

(2) *Laroch.* 269—271. *Beauch.* ii. 149.

the harbour. Notwithstanding the most heroic exertions, the Vendéens were repulsed; and the Republican commander, seeing no other way of driving them out of the suburbs, set fire to them himself, and the conflagration being aided by a high wind, soon reduced them to ashes. The Vendéens, at the earnest entreaty of their leaders, returned a second time to the assault over the smoking ruins of the suburb; but this attack was again unsuccessful. Their priests animated their courage, by marching at their head with the crucifix in their hands; the officers led on the columns, and over the smoking ruins of the houses the ardent troops rushed forward, regardless of the storm of musketry and grape which showered down upon them from the rampart, and a severe flanking fire from the gun-boats in the harbour. The palisades were broken down, the ditch crossed, and in some places even the rampart scaled; but the resistance of the Republicans was as brave as the assault; and after a murderous conflict of six-and-thirty hours, Henri de La Rochejaquelein was reluctantly compelled to order a retreat, after sustaining a loss of eighteen hundred men (1).

Their retreat towards the Loire.

This check proved extremely hurtful to the Vendéen cause. La Rochejaquelein and Stofflet determined to advance to Caen, where a strong Royalist party was known to exist; and they had already set out at the head of the cavalry for that purpose, when a revolt broke out among the troops. The authority of the chiefs was immediately disregarded; the Prince of Talmont, accused of a design to escape to Jersey, was seized by the mutineers, and with difficulty rescued from instant death. La Rochejaquelein's voice was contemned; Stofflet alone preserved any authority over the troops. The peasants, who had never been subjected to regular discipline, and could not be made to comprehend the plan of operations which their leaders had adopted, loudly exclaimed against any farther continuance of their wearisome march, and insisted upon immediately returning to their homes. The generals, after exhausting every effort of reason and eloquence, were compelled to yield to the torrent, and orders were given to the whole army to move towards the Loire, to the infinite joy of the soldiers, who declared that they would secure a passage at Angers, though its walls were made of iron (2).

They defeat the Republicans at Pontorson. Nov. 19.

The army, on its return homewards, took the road of Pontorson. Rossignol, having collected a body of eighteen thousand men, endeavoured to defend that town, and a furious conflict took place in the streets; but the attack of the Royalists, who felt that they must force their way sword in hand to la Vendée, was irresistible; the Republicans were driven at the point of the bayonet through the streets, their cannoners cut down at their guns, and the whole army defeated, with the loss of all their baggage and artillery. Rossignol fell back to Dol, where, having received considerable reinforcements, and been joined by another Republican army, which raised his force to thirty-five thousand men, he endeavoured to make head against the enemy, and bar their return to la Vendée. On the approach of the Royalists, however, he evacuated the town, and its single and spacious street was crowded by carriages, artillery, and baggage-waggons, and above sixty thousand persons who encumbered the army. At midnight, the action commenced by a vigorous attack of the Republicans on the advanced guard of the Royalists, drawn up in front of the town; the alarm was

(1) Laroch. 286—288. Jom. iv. 332. Beauch. ii. 168—170.

(2) Jom. iv. 332, 333. Laroch. 289. Beauch. ii. 173—175.

immediately given, and the troops hastily sprung to their arms, amidst the prayers and tears of their wives and children, who saw no possible escape but in their valour. The rattling of the artillery, the cries of the soldiers, the gleaming of the sabres in torchlight as the horsemen shook them in the air when advancing to the charge, the fleeting illumination of the shells which burst on all sides, filled the helpless multitude with terror and agitation. The first attack of the Royalists was entirely successful, the Republicans were driven back two leagues, but their left wing and reserve having been suddenly assailed, when disordered by success, by Rossignol's right, were thrown into confusion, and driven back with great loss to the town (1).

The confusion there soon became indescribable; the fugitives broke their way through the unarmed crowd, while the horsemen trampled under foot men, women, and children in their flight; and the street was covered with wounded and dying victims, imploring their countrymen not to desert them in their distress. In this extremity the chiefs were in such despair that they sought death; Henri de Larochejaquelein remained several minutes with his arms across in front of a battery, while Autichamp, Marigny, and the other leaders, exerted themselves to the utmost to stop the fugitives, and Stofflet, who had at first been carried away by the torrent, made the most vigorous efforts to check it. The women even snatched their fusils from the soldiers, and discharged them at the enemy; and the priests, with the cross in their hands, exhorted them to return to the combat. The curate, in particular, of Santa-Maria de Re, from an eminence harangued the men in the most energetic strains. "My children," said he, "I will march at your head with the crucifix in my hands; let those who will follow me fall on their knees, and I will give them absolution; if they fall, they will be received into Paradise, but the cowards who betray God and their families will be massacred by the Blues, and their souls consigned to hell." Above two thousand men fell on their knees, received absolution, and returned to the battle, with the curate at their head, exclaiming "Vive le Roi! Nous allons en Paradis." Stimulated in this manner, the soldiers renewed the combat; soon such was the fury of the contending parties, that they seized each other, and tore their bodies with their hands when their ammunition was exhausted; so completely were the ranks intermingled, that frequently the Vendeens and Republicans were served with ammunition from the same tumbrils. At length the valour of the Royalists prevailed; the battalions of volunteers in the Republican army began to fall into confusion, and soon the rout became general; the whole army disbanded and fled, some to Rennes and others to Fougères, leaving six thousand killed and wounded on the field of battle (2); while the Royalists, headed by their priests, returned to Dol, and hastened to the churches to return thanks to Heaven for their unhopèd-for escape from so desperate a situation.

The Republicans were repulsed, but not defeated. They retired to a position which they had strongly fortified around the town of Antrain, and there still barred the line of the Royalists' march. At noon they were attacked at all points by the Vendeens, headed by Larochejaquelein, who was fearful to allow the first moments of enthusiasm, consequent on their victory, to pass away without achieving decisive success. For long the obstinacy of the Re-

(1) Laroche, 292. Beauch. ii. 184.

(2) Laroche, 300—305. Jom. iv. 336, 337. Beauch. ii. 197, 198.

publicans arrested the furious onset of the Vendéens, but at length their intrenchments were carried, and they fled on all sides. The victors entered Antrain pell-mell with the fugitives, and a scene of matchless horror ensued in the crowded streets of that town. In the confusion of the flight, the soldiers, the camp-followers, and the wounded, were crowded amidst the artillery and baggage-waggons; the whole fell together into the hands of the Royalists, and there was great danger that an indiscriminate massacre would ensue from the troops, now wrought up by the cruelties of the Republicans to the highest pitch of exasperation. But their leaders interposed, and signalized their triumph by an extraordinary act of humanity. The wounded who fell into their hands, were not only treated and clothed with the same care as their own soldiers, but they were all sent back, without exchange, to Rennes, with a letter to the Republican authorities there, in which, after recounting the atrocious cruelty of their troops in la Vendée, they added, "but it is by acts of humanity that the Royal army avenge the massacre of its enemies (1)."

Their great  
difficulties  
notwith-  
standing  
these Vic-  
tories.

These great victories again restored the Royalist affairs; for, during the first confusion following their defeat, the Republicans were in no condition to have prevented them, either from reaching Pont-de-Cé or Saumur, or even making themselves masters of Nantes or Granville, from which the garrison had now been withdrawn (2). After long deliberation, the generals determined to march back to that place, which now would become an easy prey, and where they might both disencumber themselves of their followers, and open a communication with England. But no sooner was this determination known, than the troops again broke out into open revolt; and so vehement was the tumult, that it could only be appeased by an immediate change of the destination of the army to Angers. "Consider," said they, "how formidable the Republic is: have we not invariably found that a bloody combat is but the prelude to another still more bloody; are not we weakened by immense losses, and totally inadequate to head an insurrection in Brittany? What can we do, on an inhospitable soil, without succour, without support, often without food? Let us return to the land which gave us birth; we shall at least find some vestiges of our altars, and some remains of our homes, where we may find shelter, or in the last extremity be allowed to repose in unmolested graves. Our corpses will not there, as here, become the prey of vultures and beasts of prey. What do we expect from the Bretons? Do they not treat us like wandering brigands? Let us, therefore, hasten to regain la Vendée; Charette is still redoubtable amidst its woods; let us rally our standards to his, and he may yet lead us to victory." These discourses inflamed the minds of the people to such a degree, that all efforts to sway them became fruitless. In vain the colours were displayed on the road to Pontorson, and the chiefs made every effort to induce the soldiers to follow them; a mutiny more terrible than that at Granville arose on all sides, and the leaders were reluctantly obliged to take the road to the Loire. Thither, accordingly, they marched by Fougères, Ernée, and Laval, without being disquieted by the enemy; but the courage of the soldiers was much abated by the spectacles of horror which met them in revisiting those towns which they had formerly occupied. Everywhere the sick, the wounded, the children who had been left behind, had been massacred, by the Republicans,

(1) Beauch. ii. 200—203.

(2) Jom. iv. 338.

and their bodies still lay unburied in the streets; even the owners of the houses who had given them shelter, had been put to the sword with merciless severity. Every one approached Angers with the conviction that sooner or later, in the progress of this terrible war, he would perish in the field, or on the scaffold (1).

They are repulsed at Angers. Angers, surrounded by an old wall, and encumbered by vast faubourgs, was defended only by a small garrison, and, on the approach of the Royalists, General Danican had thrown himself into it with his brigade, less in the hope of making good the place, than of securing for it terms of capitulation; and if the troops had known how to conduct a *coup de main*, it would have fallen an easy prey, and the whole measures of the Convention would have been defeated. But the attack was not conducted with more skill than that of Granville, and the troops, worn out by fatigue and suffering, did not display their wonted bravery; for long they confined themselves to a distant cannonade; but, at length, after thirty hours of a murderous conflict, they had reached the rampart, and were commencing the escalade, when their rear was assailed by the Republican cavalry, who had been detached by Rossignol to harass the besiegers. The attack was quickly repulsed by M. Forestier with the Vendéen horse; nevertheless, such was the confusion produced by this unforeseen alarm, that a sudden panic instantly seized the army; they left the walls, and began to file off in confusion, without orders, towards Beaugé. The chiefs did their utmost to bring them back to the assault, but in vain; they even went so far as to promise them the pillage of the town if they were successful; but such was the virtue of these simple people, even amidst all their sufferings, that they rejected the proposal with horror, and declared that God would abandon them, if such a project was again entertained (2).

No sooner had the army reached Beaugé, than they perceived the ruinous consequences of the step they had taken. There were no means of passing the Loire in that line but by Saumur or Tours; the bridges of which, defended by numerous garrisons, afforded no prospect of effecting the object. A universal consternation seized the troops; though in sight of their homes, they were utterly unable to cross the river. The sick multiplied with frightful rapidity; the cries of the wounded, who were abandoned on the march, harrowed up every heart; the severity of the weather, the dreadful roads, the famine which began to prevail, the weeping crowd who surrounded the soldiers, unnerved the strongest hearts. The chiefs knew not what to do; the men were in despair (3).

In this extremity, the firmness of M. de Larochejaquelein did not desert him, and after carefully weighing every consideration, it was resolved to alter the destination of the army, and move by La Flèche upon Le Mans. The retreat was protected by a strong rear-guard, but no danger was apprehended in front. Great, then, was the consternation of the troops when on arriving at La Flèche, they found the bridge broken down, and five thousand men occupying the opposite bank of the river, while their rear was vehemently assailed. But the presence of mind of the general saved them from  
9th Dec. apparent ruin. Ordering the rear-guard to keep firm, he took three hundred of his boldest horsemen, and put a grenadier behind each *en croupe*;

(1) Laroche, 309. Jom. iv. 338. Beauch. ii. 207, 208.

(2) Jom. iv. 340. Laroche. 310. Beauch. ii. 214, 216.

(3) Jom. iv. 340. Laroche. 313, 314.

with this he crossed the stream at a ford a short distance farther up, at night-fall, and attached the Republicans in the dark. A panic instantly seized their troops, who dispersed, and fled in all directions, while Larochejaquelein re-established the bridge, and gave a day's repose to his wearied army, after which they continued their march without opposition to Le Mans (1).

Defeated  
with great  
loss at  
Le Mans.  
10th Dec.

This town was destined to witness the ruin of the Royalist cause. The troops arrived there in such a state of fatigue, depression, and suffering that it was easy to foresee that they would be unable to withstand a vigorous attack; six months of incessant marches and combats had weakened their resolution, as well as exhausted their strength. They were in the state of the Grande-Armée on their retreat from Moscow, with this additional circumstance of aggravation, that an exhausted multitude, equal in number to the soldiers, encumbered the army, and melted every heart by the spectacle of their sufferings. The numbers of sick and wounded rendered a halt of a few days absolutely necessary; and this gave time to the

12th Dec. Republican generals to concert measures for their destruction. Forces were accumulating on all sides; Marceau, Westermann, and Kléber, had assembled forty thousand men, with which they assailed the exhausted Royalist army, who were in no condition to resist an attack. They made, nevertheless, an heroic defence, though only twelve thousand could be collected in a condition fit to face the enemy. Larochejaquelein posted the bravest of his troops in a fir wood, from whence they kept up so heavy a fire as long held in check the left of the Republicans; but Kléber having driven back the division of Stofflet from its position, the whole army was borne backwards like a torrent into the town. There, however, they resisted in the most obstinate manner. Larochejaquelein pointed his cannon down all the streets leading to the great square, and filled the whole houses in the streets with musketeers; a terrible fire arose on all sides, and increased the horrors of a nocturnal combat. But after a frightful night of carnage, the Republican columns had gained ground in every quarter; Larochejaquelein had two horses killed under him; and, in spite of his utmost efforts, the mighty crowd was forced out of the town, and disbanded when they reached the plain on the other side. The scene of confusion and horror which there ensued, defies all description; Larochejaquelein in vain assembled fifteen hundred men to check the advance of the victorious columns; he was wounded, and overthrown in the tumult, his band dispersed, and the Republicans commenced an indiscriminate carnage on the shrieking fugitives. Ten thousand soldiers, and an equal number of women and children, perished under their relentless swords; while almost all their artillery, and an incalculable quantity of baggage, fell into the hands of the victors. Such as survived, owed their escape chiefly to the heroism of the Chevalier Duhoux, and Viscount Scepeaux, who, with eight hundred brave men, maintained their ground to the very last, and, with their own hands, discharged the guns of a battery which covered the rear-guard, after all the cannoneers had fallen by their side. The pitiless Republicans massacred the women and children by thousands; youth, grace, rank, and beauty, were alike disregarded; and the vast crowd which had

10th Dec.

flocked together to avoid destruction, perished under the incessant discharges of grape-shot, or the platoons of the musketry, under the eyes of the Commissioners of the Convention (2).

(1) Laroche. 317. Jom. iv. 342. Beauch. ii. 223—225.

(2) Jom. iv. 343, 344. Laroche. 320—322. Lac. xi. 167, 168. Beauch. ii. 220—226.



Their hope-  
less state.  
Heroic con-  
duct of Henri  
de Laroche-  
jaquelein.

Such of the Royalists as had escaped the carnage, reassembled at Laval two days afterwards, and it was resolved to move to Ancenis, with the design of again attempting the passage of the Loire. A single boat alone was found in that town, but four large vessels, laden with hay, were on the opposite side, which was guarded by patrols of the enemy. Henri de Larochejaquelein finding that no one had courage to attempt their seizure, himself leapt into the boat, while another, which had been brought in a cart, bore M. de Langerie and eighteen soldiers. The river, swollen with winter rains, was flowing in an impetuous torrent, and all eyes were fixed with agonizing anxiety on the frail barks on which the safety of the whole depended. At length they reached the opposite shore, and the peasants began with ardour to work at unloading the vessels of their cargoes, when a detachment of Republicans appeared on the coast, where they had landed, and attacked and dispersed the soldiers of Larochejaquelein, who was compelled to seek refuge in a neighbouring forest. At the same time, a gun-boat of the enemy appeared in the river, and, by a few discharges, sunk all the rafts which, with eager haste, the peasants had been forming to transport themselves over, while the advanced guard of Westermann assailed the rear. Thus, at the very moment when his skill was most required, the army found itself deprived of its leader (1).

Final rout  
at Savenay.

Despair now seized upon the army, which fled in confusion, without either provisions or leaders, to Niort, and from thence, through a heavy fall of snow to Savenay. The troops melted away on all sides; the sick and wounded were abandoned, the most intrepid straggled in detached parties to the banks of the Loire, and above one thousand were ferried over in the night, and formed the nucleus from whence those intrepid bands of Chouans were formed, who so long desolated the Morbihan; while some, with less resolution, surrendered themselves to the Republicans, in hopes of that amnesty which they held out as a treacherous snare to their prostrated enemies. Hardly ten thousand, of whom only six thousand were armed, could be assembled at Savenay, where, nevertheless, they made a gallant defence. Their leaders, M. de Marigny, Fleuriot, the Prince de Talmont, and other indomitable chiefs, urged the men to combat with the courage of despair; all the wounded who could sit on horseback were led out to the fight, and even young women and boys seized the muskets

Dec. 22.

of their fathers and brothers and joined the array. Long, and with heroic resolution they held the immense columns of the Republicans in check; and when at length they were obliged to retire, they fell back in good order, with the women in front, and the few pieces of artillery they had left facing about in the rear till the last cartridge and cannon-shot in the army was expended. Even after they could no longer discharge their pieces, the rear-guard continued to fight with unshaken bravery with their swords and bayonets, till they all fell under the fire of the Republicans. "I examined their bodies," said the Republican general in his despatch to Merlin de Thionville, "and recognized the stern expression, the invincible resolution of Cholet and Laval. The men who could conquer such enemies, have nothing to fear from other nations. That war, so often styled in ridicule a contest with brigands and peasants, has been the severest trial of the Republic: I now feel that we shall have children's play with our other enemies (2).

(1) Laroch. 332, 333. Jom. iv. 345, 346. Beauch. ii. 242—245.

(2) Laroch. 345—349. Jom. iv. 348, 349. Lac. xi. 168, 169. Beauch. ii. 250—252.

This defeat was a mortal stroke to the Vendéen cause; of eighty thousand souls who had crossed the Loire six weeks before, scarce three thousand got back in detached bodies to la Vendée. Concealed by the courageous hospitality of the peasants, numbers were saved from the savage cruelty of their pursuers, among whom were Mesdames de Larochejaquelein and Bonchamps, who escaped unparalleled dangers, and lived to fascinate the world by the splendid story of their husbands' virtues, and their own misfortunes. Others, less fortunate, fell into the hands of the Republicans, who hunted them down night and day during the dreadful winter of 1794, and led to prison and the scaffold the noblest blood in France (1).

Tardy movements of the English to support the insurgents.

In war every thing depends upon rapidity of execution and an accurate attention to time; the moment of success, once allowed to escape, never returns. Hardly had the Royalist standards disappeared from the shores of Brittany, when the tardy English succours, commanded by Lord Moira, who had exerted himself to the utmost to accelerate the preparations, appeared on the coast of Cherbourg, having on board eight English battalions, four thousand Hanoverians, and two thousand emigrants, in all ten thousand men. They looked out in vain for the expected signals, and after remaining on the coast for some days, and receiving intelligence of the defeat of the Royalists at Granville, returned to Guernsey, where the expedition was broken up. Had the succour arrived on the coast a fortnight sooner, had even a few English frigates appeared off Granville during the assault, to intimidate the Republicans, and encourage the Royalists, the town would have been taken, the junction of the English troops with the Royalists effected, and the united forces marched in triumph to Paris (2).

The expedition beyond the Loire was doubtless ruinous to the cause of la Vendée; and yet never did an army so situated achieve such triumphs as it did before its fatal termination. Before it fell, that army, without magazines or provisions, at the distance of forty leagues from its home, and surrounded by three hostile armies, marched one hundred and seventy leagues in sixty days, took twelve cities, gained seven battles, killed twenty thousand of the Republicans, and took from them one hundred pieces of cannon, trophies greater than were gained by the vast Allied Armies in Flanders during the whole campaign (3).

Operations of Charette.

While the great bulk of the Vendéen forces were engaged in this perilous and fatal expedition, Charette, with a few thousand men who adhered to his standard, made himself master of the Isle of Noirmoutiers, where the Republicans had left but a slender garrison. He immediately began fortifying it with care, with the design of making a dépôt for his sick, wounded, and stores (4). From this place of security he made various expeditions into the adjoining province during the winter of 1793-4, with various success, until the return of the wreck of the Grand Army from its expedition beyond the Loire. Frequently the Republican general wrote to the Mayor of a village, that if the inhabitants would remain they should suffer no violence, and having prevailed on them by this deceitful pledge not to fly, surrounded it with his soldiers, and put every living soul to death (5). General Turreau was appointed commander-in-chief of the Army of the West, and

(1) Jom. iv. 349. Laroche. 350—364.

(2) Jom. iv. 351. Beauch. ii. 178—181.

(3) Beauch. ii. 260.

(4) Beauch. v. 258. Ibid. ii. 293—297.

(5) Laroche. 144.

he found himself nominally at the head of fifty thousand men, but one-half of whom alone were fit for active service, the remainder being sick, wounded, or exhausted in the hospitals. Turreau commenced his operations by a descent on the Island of Noirmoutiers, of which he easily made himself master, in the absence of Charette. He there found d'Elbée covered with wounds, who had been removed to that place of security after the battle of Chollet. When the soldiers entered his room, where he was unable to rise from his bed, they exclaimed,—“Here then is d'Elbée at last.”—“Yes,” he replied, “here is your greatest enemy; if I had been able to wield a sword you should never have taken Noirmoutiers.” He underwent a long interrogatory, which he answered with equal firmness and good faith; and met death with unshaken constancy sitting in his chair, from which his wounds disabled him from rising. His last words were raised to save an innocent man who was led out for execution by his side. The officer who presided at the execution, named, after d'Elbée and two others who were placed together, “Wieland the traitor, who sold Noirmoutiers to the rebels.”—D'Elbée, instantly summoning up all his strength, exclaimed:—“No, gentlemen, Wieland is not a traitor; he never aided our party, and you are about to put to death an innocent man;” but scarcely were the generous words uttered, when the order to fire was given, and the whole four fell together. His wife was next day executed with the generous hostess who had given her shelter in her misfortunes; they both evinced in their last moments the same courage which had been displayed by the murdered general. Numbers of other Royalists were shot at the same time, among whom were the two young sons of Maignen de l'Écorce, who had followed their father to battle with a courage beyond their years (1).

Henri de Larochejaquelein did not long survive his brave commander. After his separation from the army at the rout of Le Mans, he took refuge in the Forest of Visins, near the Loire, from whence he made frequent incursions upon the Republican posts with such success, that his little party daily increased, and proved a source of unceasing disquietude to the Republicans. In one of his incursions he made prisoner an adjutant-general, bearing an order to proclaim an amnesty to the peasants, and massacre them after they submitted, a discovery which contributed in a powerful manner to perpetuate the war, by taking away all hope from the vanquished. He fell at length the victim of his humanity: approaching two Republican grenadiers, upon whom  
 March 4, 1794. his party was preparing to fall, he ran forward, exclaiming, “Surrender, I give you quarter.” Hardly were the words uttered when the men shot him dead on the spot. He was aged only twenty-one years. When his soldiers had buried him where he fell, they exclaimed:—“Now the Convention may indeed say that la Vendée no longer exists (2).”

The Prince de Talmont about the same time fell a victim to the Republican revenge. He was made prisoner near Laval, and after being led about in triumph from city to city, for a considerable time, was executed in the court of his own château. When brought before his judges, he said, “Descended from La Trémouille, the son of the Lord of Laval, I was in duty bound to serve the King; and I will show in my last moments that I was worthy to defend the throne. Sixty-eight combats with the Republicans have rendered

(1) *Journ. v. 265. Laroch. 402, 403, Beauch. ii.*  
 347.

(2) *Lac. xi. 178. Beauch. ii. 374, 375, Laroch. 406.*

me familiar with death.”—“You are an aristocrat, and I am a patriot,” said the judge.—“Execute your office,” replied he, “I have performed my duty (1).” His faithful servant was offered his life, but he refused to survive his master, and followed him to the scaffold.

Unheard-of  
Cruelties of  
the Repub-  
licans.

The execution of these gallant chiefs put an end to the first period of the Vendéen war. It might then have been terminated, had the Republicans made a humane use of their victory, and sheathed the sword of conquest after it had destroyed its enemies in the field. But the darkest period of the tragedy was approaching, and in the rear of their armies came those fiends in human form, who exceeded even the horrors of Marat and Robespierre, and have left a darker stain on French history than the tyranny of Nero, or the Massacre of Bartholomew. Their atrocities took all hope from the vanquished; and in despair and revenge sprung up a new set of CHOUAN bands, who, under Charette, Stofflet, and Tinteniac, long maintained the Royalist cause in the Western Provinces, and proved more fatal to the Republicans than all the armies of Germany.

Turreau  
and the In-  
fernal Co-  
lumn.

Turreau was the first who commenced against the Vendéens a systematic war of extermination. He formed twelve corps, aptly denominated *infernal columns*, whose orders were to traverse the country in every direction, isolate it from all communication with the rest of the world, carry off or destroy all the grain and cattle; murder all the inhabitants; and burn down all the houses. These orders were too faithfully executed; the infernal columns pierced the country in every direction; their path might be traced by the conflagration of villages, their footsteps known by the corpses of the inhabitants. A contemporary Republican writer has left this character of their exploits:—“It seemed as if the Vendéens were no longer regarded as men; the pregnant woman, the child in the cradle, even the beasts of the field, the very stones, the houses, the soil itself, appeared to the Republicans enemies worthy of a total extermination (2).” But from this atrocious warfare arose new difficulties to the invaders. From the consequences of their ravages, provisions failed equally to them as their enemies; and the Chouan bands were swelled by multitudes who were driven to despair by the conflagration of their dwellings, and the massacre of their relations. Strengthened by such recruits, the unconquerable Charette maintained the contest, and often took a bloody revenge on his enemies. Acquainted with every road and ambuscade in the country, capable of enduring the extremities of hunger, serene in danger, cheerful in misfortune, affable with his soldiers, inexhaustible in resources, invincible in resolution, he displayed in that Guerilla warfare the talents of a consummate general. In vain Turreau sent against him General Haxo, one of the ablest of the Republican commanders; his indefatigable opponent retired before him, till he arrived at a favourable place for the attack, and then turning to his men, and ordering them to halt: “We have retired far enough,” said he, “now is the time to show the Convention that la Vendée still exists.” With that they precipitated themselves with such fury upon their pursuers, that the column was broken, and put to flight, and General Haxo himself slain, while bravely endeavouring to restore the combat (3).

Executions  
at Nantes.

While Turreau was pursuing with varied success the system of extermination in la Vendée, the scaffold was erected at Nantes, and

(1) Laroch. 398. Beauch. ii. 262, 263.

(2) Toul. v. 199. Beauch. ii. 369.

(3) Jom. v. 266, 272, 273. Lac. xi. 174. 176. Beauch. ii. 369, 371, 410—418. Laroch. 414.

those infernal executions commenced, which have affixed a stain upon the French Revolution, unequalled since the beginning of the world. A Revolutionary Tribunal was formed there under the direction of Carrier, and it soon outstripped even the rapid march of Danton and Robespierre. "Their principle," says the Republican historian, "was, that it was necessary to destroy, *en masse*, all the prisoners. At their command was formed a corps called the Legion of Marat, composed of the most determined and bloodthirsty of the Revolutionists, the members of which were entitled, of their own authority, to incarcerate any person whom they chose. The number of their prisoners was soon between three and four thousand, and they divided among them-

Legion of Marat. selves all their property. Whenever a fresh supply of captives was

wanted, the alarm was spread of a counter revolution; the *générale* beat, the cannon planted; and this was immediately followed by innumerable arrests. Nor were they long in disposing of the captives. The miserable wretches were either slain with poniards in the prisons, or carried out in a vessel, and drowned by wholesale in the Loire. On one occasion, a hundred 'fanatical priests,' as they were termed, were taken out together, stripped of their clothes, and precipitated into the waves. The same vessel served for many of these Noyades; and the horror expressed by many of the citizens for that mode of execution formed the ground for fresh arrests, and increased murders. Women, big with child; infants, eight, nine, and ten years of age, were thrown together into the stream, on the sides of which, men, armed with sabres, were placed, to cut off their hands, if the waves should throw them undrowned on the shore. The citizens, with loud shrieks, implored the lives of the little innocents, and numbers offered to adopt them as their own; but, though a few were granted to their urgent entreaty, the greater part were doomed to destruction. Thus were consigned to the grave whole generations at once; the ornament of the present, the hope of the future (4)."

Carrier's On one occasion, by orders of Carrier, twenty-three of the Royal-  
Republican Baptisms and lists, on another, twenty-four, were guillotined together, without  
Marriages. any trial. The executioner remonstrated, but in vain. Among them were many children of seven or eight years of age, and seven women; the executioner died two or three days after with horror at what he himself had done. At another time, one hundred and forty women, incarcerated as suspected, were drowned together, though actively engaged in making bandages and shirts for the Republican soldiers. So great was the multitude of captives who were brought in on all sides, that the executioners, as well as the company of Marat, declared themselves exhausted with fatigue; and a new method of disposing of them was adopted, borrowed from Nero, but improved on the plan of that tyrant. A hundred, or a hundred and fifty victims, for the most part women and children, were crowded together in a boat, with a concealed trap-door in the bottom, which was conducted into the middle of the Loire; at a signal given, the crew leapt into another boat, the bolts were withdrawn, and the shrieking victims precipitated into the waves, amidst the laughter of the company of Marat, who stood on the banks, to cut down any who approached the shore. This was what Carrier called his *Republican Baptisms*. The *Republican Marriages* were, if possible, a still greater refinement on cruelty. Two persons of different sexes, generally an old man and an old woman, or a young man and a young woman, bereft

(4) Toul. v. 103, 104. Beauch. ii. 279—281. Th. vi. 374.

of every species of dress, were bound together, and after being left in torture in that situation for half an hour, thrown into the river. It was ascertained, by authentic documents, that six hundred children had perished by that inhuman species of death; and such was the quantity of corpses accumulated in the Loire, that the water of that river was infected so as to render a public ordinance necessary, forbidding the use of it to the inhabitants (1); and the mariners, when they heaved their anchors, frequently brought up boats charged with corpses. Birds of prey flocked to the shores, and fed on human flesh; while the fish became so poisonous, as to induce an order of the Municipality of Nantes, prohibiting them to be taken by the fishermen (2).

Dreadful  
Scenes in  
the Prisons.

The scenes in the prisons which preceded these horrid executions exceeded all that romance had figured of the terrible. Many women died of terror the moment a man entered their cells, conceiving that they were about to be led out to the Noyades; the floors were covered with the bodies of their infants, numbers of whom were yet quivering in the agonies of death. On one occasion, the inspector entered the prison to seek for a child, where the evening before he had left above three hundred infants; they were all gone in the morning, having been drowned the preceding night. To all the representations of the citizens in favour of these innocent victims, Carrier answered, "They are all vipers; let them be stifled." Three hundred young women of Nantes were drowned by him in one night; so far from having had any share in political discussions, they were of the unfortunate class who live by the pleasures of others. Several hundred persons were thrown every night, for some months, into the river: their shrieks at being led out of the entrepôt on board the barks, wakened all the inhabitants of the town, and froze every heart with horror. Fifteen thousand persons perished there under the hands of the executioner, or of diseases in prison, in one month; the total victims of the Reign of Terror at that place exceeded thirty thousand (3).

The peasants, both men and women, of la Vendée, met death in general with the most heroic courage; they perished boldly avowing their opinions, and exclaiming, "Vive le Roi! nous allons en Paradis." Innumerable instances of heroism occurred, especially among the female sufferers. Madame de Jourdain was led out to be drowned, with her three daughters; a soldier wished to save the youngest, who was very beautiful; she threw herself into the water to share the fate of her mother, but falling on a heap of dead, could not sink. "Push me in," she exclaimed, "the water is not deep enough," and sunk beneath his thrust. Mademoiselle Cuissan, aged sixteen, of still greater beauty, excited the most vehement admiration in a young officer of Hussars, who spent three hours at her feet entreating her to allow him to save her; but as he could not undertake to free an aged parent, the partner of her captivity, she refused life, and threw herself into the Loire along with her mother (4).

Adventures  
of Agatha  
Larocheja-  
quelein.

Agatha Larochejaquelein escaped in the most extraordinary manner. She had left an asylum, in a cottage at Brittany, in consequence of one of the deceitful amnesties which the Republicans published to lure their victims from their places of concealment, and was seized and

(1) Beauch. ii. 281, 283. Th. vi. 373. Lac. xii. 164, 165. Toul. v. 104, 105—120.

(2) Th. vi. 374.

(3) Toul. v. 119, 120. Laroch. 394. Beauch. ii,

284, 285. Th. vi. 374. Prudhomme, Vict. de la Révolution. Chateaubriand, Etud. Hist. i. Prof. 45.

(4) Laroch. 392, 393.

brought before Lamberty, one of the ferocious satellites of Carrier. Her beauty excited his admiration. "Are you afraid, brigand?" said he. "No, General," replied the worthy inheretrix of her name. "When you feel fear," said he, "send for Lamberty." When brought to the entrepôt, seeing death approaching, she recollected his words, and sent for the general. He took her out alone at night into a little boat on the Loire, with a concealed trap, which Carrier had given him for his private murders, and wished to sacrifice her to his desires; she resisted, upon which he threatened to drown her, but she, anticipating him, flew to the side to throw herself into the river. The Republican was softened; "You are a brave girl," said he, "I will save you." In effect, he left her concealed at the bottom of the boat, among some bushes on the margin of the stream, where she lay for eight days and nights a witness to the unceasing nocturnal massacre of her fellow-prisoners. At length she was taken from her place of concealment, and secreted with a man of the name of Sullivan, who resolved to save her, from horror at a murder which he had committed on his own brother, whom he had denounced as a Vendéen to the Republican authorities. The intelligence however, of his humanity got wind, and Lamberty was accused some time afterwards of having saved some women from the Noyades. To prevent the evidence of this in Agatha's case, she was seized by a friend of Lamberty of the name of Robin, who carried her into a boat, where he was proceeding to poniard her, in order to extinguish any trace of his having facilitated her escape, when her beauty again subdued the ruthless murderer. She threw herself at his feet, and prevailed on him to save her life. She was again arrested, however, in the place where he had concealed her, and would certainly have been guillotined, had not the fall of Robespierre suspended the executions, and ultimately restored her to liberty (1).

And Madame de Bonchamps. The fate of Madame de Bonchamps was not less remarkable. After the rout at Le Mans, she lived, like all the other wives of the officers and generals, on the charity of the peasants in Brittany, whose courage and devotion no misfortunes could diminish. They at once told their names and connexions; the faithful people received them with tears of joy, and not only concealed them in their dwellings, but stinted themselves in their meals to furnish them with provisions. For several days, when the pursuit was hottest, she was concealed, with her infant child, in the thick foliage of an oak-tree, at the foot of which the Republican soldiers were frequently passing; a cough or a cry from the infant would have betrayed them both, but the little creature, though suffering under a painful malady, never uttered a groan; and both mother and child frequently slept in peace for hours, when the bayonets of their pursuers were visible through the openings of the leaves. At night, when the enemy were asleep, the little children of the cottagers brought them provisions; and occasionally some old soldiers of her husband's army hazarded their lives to render them assistance. She was at length arrested, and brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Nantes; the recollection of the five thousand captives, whose lives the dying hero had saved, could not save his widow from an unanimous condemnation. The atrocious cruelty of this proceeding, however, excited so much commiseration among the numerous survivors who had been saved by his clemency, that the vehemence of their remonstrances obtained a respite from the judges;

(1) Laroch. 394—396.

during which, the peasants who had protected her little girl sent her to the prison, and the mother had the delight of hearing her infant pray every night and morning at her bedside for her health and deliverance. At length, after a long captivity, she obtained her liberation; her daughter was intrusted with presenting the petition to the court (1); and even the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal could not withstand the touching appeal made to them by the little child in behalf of its captive parent (2).

Cruelty of  
the small  
Shopkeepers in the  
Towns.

"The poor people," says Larochejaquelein, "in Nantes, were exceedingly kind, and did their utmost to save the victims of the Revolution; all the rich merchants also were humane, for though they had at first supported the Revolution, yet they were soon shocked with its crimes, and, in consequence, were persecuted as well as the Royalists; one hundred and nine of them were sent up to Paris for trial, and only saved by the fall of Robespierre. The ferocious class who lent their aid to the massacres and the Noyades, was composed of the little shopkeepers and more opulent of the artisans, many of whom came from other towns besides Nantes (3);" words of vast political importance, as designating the class in whom revolutionary fervour is ever most violent, and by whom its principal atrocities are committed.

Heroic benevolence of  
the country  
Peasants.

But, if humanity has cause to blush for the atrocious cruelty of the tradesmen in the towns of Brittany, it may dwell with unalloyed delight on the generous hospitality of the peasants in the country. The experience they had acquired in concealing the priests, and the young men required for the conscription, rendered them exceedingly expert at eluding the search of their enemies. Numbers were shot for giving an asylum to the Vendéens; but nothing could check their courageous humanity. Alike men, women, and children, displayed unbounded goodness and inexhaustible resources. A poor girl, deaf and dumb, had been made to comprehend the dangers of the Royalists, and incessantly warned them by signs when their enemies were approaching. Neither menaces of death, nor offers of gold, could shake the fidelity of the youngest children. The dogs even had contracted an aversion to the Republicans, who always used them harshly; they barked invariably at their approach, and were thus the means of saving great numbers. On the other hand, they never uttered a sound when the Royalist fugitives were to be seen, taught by the peasants to do nothing that could betray them. There was not a cottage in the whole country where a fugitive might not present himself at any hour with perfect security; if they could not conceal them, they gave them food, and guided them on their road. For none of these perilous services would they accept any reward; they were even seriously offended if any was offered (4).

On reviewing the history of this melancholy war, nothing is so remarkable

(1) Bonch. 72, 87.

(2) A singular incident attended the presenting of this petition. The little girl, who was only six years old, went up to the judges, and presented the paper, saying, "Citizens, I am come to ask the pardon of mamma." Casting their eyes on the paper, they beheld the name of Bonchamps, and one of them addressing her, said he would give her the pardon if she would sing one of her best songs, as he knew she had a voice which charmed all the inmates of the prison. Upon this, she sung with a loud voice the words she had heard from sixty thousand men on the field of battle:—

"Vive, vive le Roi!  
A bas la République!"

Had she been a little older, these words would have condemned both herself and her mother; but the simplicity with which they were uttered disarmed their wrath; they smiled, and after some observations on the detestable education which these fanatical Royalists gave to their children, dismissed her with the pardon she desired. (Bonch. 87.)

(3) Laroche. 391, 392.

(4) Laroche. 350, 351. Bonch. ii. 267, 268.



Reflections on the extraordinary Sacrifices of the Vendéens; as the prodigious victories gained by the peasants in so sequestered a district, and the near approach they made to the re-establishment of the monarchy, contrasted with the feeble efforts and comparatively bloodless actions of the great military powers which combated on the frontier. Without the aid of mountains, fortresses, or any of the ordinary resources of war, undisciplined and inexperienced, destitute of cavalry, artillery, or military stores, without either magazines or money, they did more towards the overthrow of the Revolution than all the vast armies which Europe had assembled for its destruction. While the victories of the Allies or the Republicans were never attended with the loss of more than three or four thousand men to their opponents, and seldom led to any other result than the overrunning of a province, or the reduction of a fortress, the triumphs of the Vendéens dissipated whole armies, were signalized often by the loss of ten and fifteen thousand men to the Republicans, made them masters of vast parks of artillery, and but for the inability of the chiefs to keep the peasants to their colours after any great success, would, by the admission of the Republicans themselves, have re-established the throne (1). We pass at once in the same year, from the battles of Famars and Kaiserslautern, to the triumphs of Marengo and Hohenlinden. Such were the astonishing results of the enthusiastic valour which the strong feelings of religion and loyalty produced in this gallant people; such the magnitude of the result, when instead of cold calculation, vehement passion was brought into action.

And the Cause of their Disasters. On the other hand, the ultimate result of this contest, notwithstanding the heroic efforts of the peasantry, is the strongest proof of the inability of mere valour, unaided by discipline, experience, and military resources, to contend permanently with a regular government. No future insurrection can be expected to display greater bravery, none be animated with a stronger spirit, none gain more glorious successes, than that of la Vendée. Yet all was unavailing. This great example should always be kept in mind in calculating on the probable results of popular enthusiasm, when opposed to the systematic efforts of discipline and organization. It was the want of these which proved fatal to the Vendéens. Had they possessed two or three fortified towns, they might have repaired, under their shelter, all their disasters; had they been masters of a regular army, they might have improved their victories into lasting conquests. The want of these two things rendered their triumphs unproductive of real advantages, and their defeats the forerunner of irreparable ruin. The war at a subsequent period, in Tyrol and Spain, demonstrated the same truth; while the durable successes of the Portuguese and Russian campaigns showed the vast results which arise from engrafting the vigour of popular enthusiasm on the steady courage of regular forces. The conclusion to be drawn from this is, not that popular feeling can effect no lasting achievement, and that every thing in war depends on military organization, but that it is the combination of the two which is requisite to permanent success. In 1793, the discipline of Austria and Russia on the Rhine could effect nothing, because it was not animated by a vehement spirit; while the enthusiasm of la Vendée withered, because it was unsupported by regular organization. In 1812, the Russians combined both to resist the attack of an enemy tenfold greater, and the campaign of Moscow was the consequence.

(1) Jom. vi. 400.

Vendéen  
War finally  
commits the  
Revolution  
against Re-  
ligion.

But though la Vendée fell, her blood was not shed in vain. The sword of the conqueror subdues the bodies, but it is often the heroism of the vanquished which subjugates the minds of men, and achieves conquests of eternal duration. The throne of Cæsar has passed away; but the blood of the Christian martyrs cemented a fabric of eternal duration;—the tyranny of Mary for a time crushed the religious freedom of England; but Latimer and Ridley lighted a fire which will never be extinguished. From the ashes of la Vendée has sprung the spirit which hurled Napoleon from his throne, and is destined to change the face of the moral world. It first put the cause of Revolution openly and irrevocably at war with that of Religion; the friends of real freedom may thank it for permanently enlisting on their side a power which will never be subdued. From the atrocious severities of the Republican sway, in this devoted province, has arisen the profound hatred of all the believers in the Christian faith at their rule, and the stubborn spirit which was everywhere roused to resist it; the desolation of the Bocage was avenged by the Charnel House of Spain; the horrors of the Loire have been forgotten in the passage of the Berezina. Periods of suffering are in the end seldom lost either to the cause of truth, or the moral discipline of nations; it is the sunshine of prosperity which spreads the fatal corruption. Christianity withered under the titled hierarchy; but she shone forth in spotless purity from the revolutionary agonies of France; and that celestial origin which was obscured by the splendour of a prosperous, has been revealed in the virtues of a suffering age.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1793.—PART II.

FROM THE ROUT IN THE CAMP OF CÆSAR, TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

## ARGUMENT.

Principles of Carnot for the Conduct of the War—Aided by the effects of the Revolution—Vigorous Measures of the Government—Their efforts to rouse the whole Population—Great Levy of 1,200,000 Men ordered, and carried into effect—Carnot, War Minister—His Character—Retirement of Kaunitz at Vienna—Appointment of Thugut—His Character, and first measures—Incipient divisions of Prussia and Austria—Recognition of the Maritime Law by the Allies—Absurd Policy of the Allied Powers—The English insist upon dividing the Army—Its ruinous Consequences—They March to Dunkirk, and the Imperialists to Le Quesnoy—Le Quesnoy falls : but the Siege of Dunkirk is raised by the French—Bad Consequences of this Disaster—The Republicans do not follow up their success with vigour, and Houchard is arrested—Maubeuge is besieged—Jourdan takes the Command of the Army—Firm Conduct of the Convention—Jourdan approaches to raise the Siege—Battle of Watignies—Retreat of the Allies, and raising of the Siege—Conclusion of the Campaign in Flanders—Both Parties go into Winter Quarters—Pichegru appointed to the command of the Republicans—Campaign on the Rhine—Inactivity of the Prussians—French defeated at Pirmasenz, and their lines are Stormed at Weissenberg with a total Rout—Leads to no Results—Fort Vauban taken, and Landau blockaded by the Allies—Cruel Revenge of the French in Alsace—Divisions between the Prussians and Austrians—Able Measures of the French : they drive the Allies over the Rhine, and raise the Blockade of Landau—Campaign on the Spanish Frontier—On the Bidassoa—And Eastern Pyrenees—Invasion of Roussillon by the Spaniards—They are Defeated—Battle of Truellas, and Defeat of the French—Second Rout of the French, who fall back to Perpignan—Campaign in the Maritime Alps—Feeble Irruption of the Piedmontese on the side of Chambéry—Great Discontents in the South of France—Abortive Insurrection at Marseille—Revolt at Toulon, which opens its Gates to the English—Revolt and Siege of Lyon—Great Efforts of the Republicans for its Reduction—Bombardment of the City, and cruelty of the Besiegers—Dreadful Sufferings of the Inhabitants—Their heroic Efforts—Percy forces his way through the Besiegers' Line—Town Capitulates—Sanguinary Measures of the Convention to the Inhabitants—Collot-d'Herbois' Proceedings—His atrocious Cruelty—Terrible Measures of the Revolutionary Tribunal there—Mitrailades of the Prisoners—Vast Numbers who thus perished—Siege of Toulon—Allies assemble for its Defence—Progress of the Siege—Decisive Measures of Napoléon—Capture of the exterior Forts—Despair of the Inhabitants—Burning of the Arsenal and Fleet—Horrors of the Evacuation—Dreadful Cruelty of the Republicans—General Reflections on the Issue of the Campaign.

Carnot's principles for conducting the War. "CARNOT," said Napoléon, "has organized victory." It was the maxim of this great man, "That nothing was so easy as to find excellent officers in all ranks, if they were only chosen according to their capacity and their courage. For this reason, he took the utmost pains to make himself acquainted with their names and character; and such was the extent of his information, that it was rare for a soldier of merit to escape him, even though only a simple private. He deemed it impossible, that an army, commanded by officers chosen exclusively from a limited class of society, could long maintain a contest with one led by those chosen with discernment from the inferior ranks. Such commanders as Turenne and Condé seemed too rare to be calculated upon with any degree of certainty from a

privileged class; while the mine of talent which lay hid in the lower stages of society, presented inexhaustible resources (1)."

This principle being founded on the eternal laws of nature, is of universal application. It constitutes the great superiority of Republican over Monarchical forces; and when once armies have been organized, and thoroughly disciplined on this footing, they never can be successfully resisted but by troops in whom the same military virtues have been developed. Supposing the abilities of the higher orders to be equal to those of an equal number in the inferior, it is impossible that they can ever produce as great a mass of talent as will emerge on a free competition from the numerous ranks of their humble competitors. A hundred thousand men can never produce as many energetic characters as ten millions.

Aided by  
the effects  
of the Revo-  
lution.

The French Revolution, by opening the career of talent to all ranks indiscriminately, and affording the means of elevation, in a peculiar manner to the most energetic and audacious characters, was eminently favourable to the growth of military prowess. The distress consequent on the closing of so many branches of industry, the agitation arising from the dissolution of all the bonds of society, the restless habits acquired by successful revolt, all conspired to spread a taste for military exploit, and fill the ranks of the army with needy but ardent adventurers. Such dispositions are always prevalent during civil dissensions, because it is the nature of such conflicts to awaken the passions, and disqualify for the habits of ordinary life. But they were in an especial manner excited by the campaign of 1793, first by the call which resounded through France to defend the state, and next by the thirst for military glory which sprang up by the

Feb. 6.

defeat of the invasion.

Vigorous  
Measures of  
the Govern-  
ment.

When invasion had, on every side, pierced the territory of France, and civil war tore its bosom, the Government took the most energetic steps to meet the danger. The Convention had armed the Committee of Public Safety with a power more terrible than ever had been wielded by an Eastern Conqueror; and the decrees of the Legislature corresponded to the energy of their measures. They felt, in the language of Danton, "That the head of Louis was the terrible gauntlet which they had thrown down to the Monarchs of Europe: that life or death was in the struggle." The whole power of France was called forth; ten thousand committees, spread over every part of the country, carried into execution the despotic mandates of the Committee of Public Safety, and its resistless powers wrung not less out of its sufferings than its patriotism the means of successful resistance (2).

No situation could be more perilous than that in which the Revolutionary government was now placed. No less than 280,000 men were in the field on the side of the Allies, from Basle to Dunkirk; the ancient barrier of France was broken by the capture of Valenciennes and Condé, Mayence gave the invaders a secure passage into the heart of the country, while Toulon and Lyon had raised the standard of revolt, and a devouring fire consumed the heart of the Western provinces. Sixty thousand insurgents in la Vendée threatened Paris in the rear, while 180,000 Allies in front seemed prepared to encamp under its walls. The forces of the Republic were not only inferior

(1) Carnot, 31. 32.

(2) *Jom.* iii. 25. *Th.* v. 207. *Mig.* i. 246.

in number, but their discipline and equipment were in the most dilapidated state (1).

Their Efforts to rouse the whole population.

All the deficiencies of the Republic in numbers and organization were speedily supplied, by the extraordinary energy and ability which rose to the head of military affairs, after the insurrection of 31st May, and the establishment of the Committee of Public Safety. Barrère, on the part of that able body, declared in the Assembly, "Liberty

23d Aug. 1793.

has become the creditor of every citizen: some owe it their industry; others their fortune; some their councils; others their arms; all their lives. Every native of France, of whatever age or sex, is called to the defence of his country. All moral and physical powers; all political and industrial resources, are at its command. Let every one then occupy his post in the grand national and military movement which is in preparation. The young men will march to the frontiers; the more advanced forge the arms, transport the baggage and artillery, or provide the subsistence requisite for their defence. The women will make the tents, the dresses of the soldiers, and carry their beneficent labours into the interior of the hospitals; even the hands of infancy may be usefully employed; and the aged, imitating the example of ancient virtue, will cause themselves to be transported into the public places, to animate the youth by their exhortations and their example. Let the national edifices be converted into barracks, the public squares into workshops, the cellars into manufactories of saltpetre; let the saddle-horses be furnished for the cavalry, the draught-horses for the artillery; the fowling-pieces, the swords and pikes, will suffice for the service of the interior. The Republic is a besieged city; all its territory must become a vast camp." These energetic measures were not only adopted by the Assembly, but immediately carried into execution.

Great levy of 1,200,000 Men ordered and executed.

France became an immense workshop, resounding with the note of military preparation; the roads were covered with conscripts hastening to the different points of assembly; fourteen armies, and 1,200,000 soldiers, were soon under arms. The whole property of the state, by means of confiscations, and the forced circulation of assignats, was put at the disposal of the government; the insurgent population everywhere threw the better classes into captivity, while bands of revolutionary ruffians, paid by the state, perambulated every village in its territory, and wrung from the terrified inhabitants unqualified submission to the despotic Republic. At the same time, the means of raising supplies were provided with equal energy. All the old claims on the state were converted into a great Revolutionary debt, in which the new could not be distinguished from the ancient creditors. A forced tax of a milliard, or L.40,000,000 sterling, was instantly ordered to be levied from the rich, which was realized in paper, secured at once on the national domains. As the prices of every article, even those of the first necessity, were altogether deranged by these measures, and the prospect of famine was everywhere immediate, the Municipalities throughout France were invested with the power of seizing subsistence, and merchandise of every kind, in the hands of the owners, and compelling their sale for a fixed price in assignats; in other words, taking them for an elusory payment. The great object of all these measures was at once to repel the foreign invasion, and render the national domains an immediate fund of income, at a time when purchasers could not be found; and

(1) Jom. iv. 21, 24. Tb. v. 170.

it must be confessed, that never did a government adopt such vast and energetic measures to attain these objects (1).

Fear became the great engine for filling the ranks: the bayonets of the Allies appeared less formidable than the guillotine of the Convention; and safety, despaired of every where else, was found alone in the armies on the frontier. The destruction of property, the ruin of industry, the agonies of millions, appeared as nothing to men who wielded the engines of the Revolution; fortune or wealth have no weight with those who are engaged in a struggle of life and death (2).

By a strange combination of circumstances, the ruin of commercial credit, the loss of the colonies, the stagnation of industry, the drying up of the sources of opulence, augmented the present resources of the government. Ruling an impoverished and bankrupt state, the Convention was for the time the richest power in Europe. Despotism, it is true, dries up the sources of future wealth; but it gives a command of present resources which no regular government can obtain. The immense debts of government were paid in paper money, issued at no expense, and bearing a forced circulation; the numerous confiscations gave a shadow of security to its engagements; the terrible right of requisition put every remnant of private wealth at its disposal; the conscription filled the army with all the youth of the state; terror and famine impelled voluntary multitudes into its ranks. Before them was the garden of hope; behind them a howling wilderness.

Carnot, War  
Minister.  
His charac-  
ter.

At the head of the military department was placed Carnot, a man whose extraordinary and unbending character contributed more than any other circumstance to the early success of the Revolutionary wars. Austere in character, unbending in disposition, republican in principle, he more nearly resembled the patriots of antiquity than any other statesman in modern times. It was his misfortune to be associated with Robespierre in the Committee of Public Safety, during the whole of the Reign of Terror; and his name, in consequence, stands affixed to many of the worst acts of that sanguinary tyrant; but he has solemnly asserted, and his character entitles the allegation to attention, that in the pressure of business he signed these documents without knowing what they contained; and that he saved more lives by his entreaties, than his colleagues destroyed by their severity (3). He was the creator of the new military art in France, which Dumouriez was only permitted to sketch, and Napoléon brought to perfection. Simple in his manners, unostentatious in his habits, incorruptible in his inclinations, he was alike superior to the love of wealth, the weakness of inferior, and the passion for power, the infirmity of noble minds. When called to the post of danger by the voice of his country, he never declined the peril: disdaining to court Napoléon, in the plenitude of his power, and alone voting against his Imperial crown, he fled to his assistance in the hour of distress, and tendered the aid to a falling, which he had refused to a conquering monarch. Intrusted with the dictatorship of the armies, he justified his country's choice by victory; superior even to the triumphs he had won, he resigned with pleasure the possession of power to exercise his understanding in the abstract sciences, or renovate his heart by the impressions of country life. Almost alone of the illustrious men of the age, his character has emerged

(1) Hard. 278. Mig. ii. 287. Jom. iv. 22, 23.  
Th. v. 207, 208.

(2) Jom. iv. 21. Hard. ii. 279.

(3) Carnot's *Mémoires*. 230.

comparatively untainted from the Revolutionary cauldron; and history has to record with the pride due to real greatness, that after having wielded irresistible force, and withstood unfettered power, he died poor and unfriended in a foreign land (1).

It was in the extraordinary energy and ability of the Committee of Public Safety (2), joined to the ferment excited by the total overthrow of society, and the despotic power wielded by the Convention, that the real secret is to be found of the successful resistance by France to the formidable invasion of 1793. The inability of Napoléon to resist a similar attack in 1815, demonstrates this important truth, and should be a warning to future ages not to incur the same risk, in the hope of obtaining a similar triumph. Superior in military talent, heading a band of veterans, supported by a terrible name, he sought in vain to communicate to the empire, the energy which, under their iron grasp, had been brought into action in the Republic (3). A rational being will never succeed in equalling the strength which, in a transport of frenzy, a madman can exert.

Retirement of Kaunitz at Vienna. While such extraordinary and unheard-of efforts were making in France to resist the invasion with which they were menaced, a change, fraught in its ultimate result with important consequences, took place in the Imperial Government. Kaunitz, so long at the head of the Austrian cabinet, had survived his age; his cautious habits, veteran experience, and great abilities were inadequate to supply the want of that practical acquaintance with affairs which arises from having grown up under their influence. The French Revolution had opened up a new era in human affairs: the old actors, how distinguished soever, were unacquainted with the novel machinery, and unfit to play their parts in the mighty drama which was approaching. The veteran Austrian diplomatist retired from the helm, full of years, and loaded with honours, from a prudent disinclination to risk his great reputation in the stormy scenes which had already arisen (4).

28th March 1793. Thugut Foreign Minister at Vienna. He was succeeded in the direction of foreign affairs by THUGUT, who long kept possession of the helm during the Revolutionary war. The son of a poor boatman at Lintz, he had, by the industry of his parents, been early placed at the school of oriental languages at Vienna, where his diligence and abilities attracted the notice of the Empress Maria-Theresa. She recommended him to the director of the college, and His Character. at the age of fifteen he was attached as interpreter to the Austrian embassy at Constantinople, from whence he gradually rose in the diplomatic line to the portfolio of foreign affairs. Though he had long resided at Paris, and was intimately connected with Mirabeau, whose conversion to the court was partly owing to his exertions, he maintained throughout his career an inflexible hostility to Republican principles; and though his combinations were not always crowned with success, his bitterest enemies cannot deny him the credit of a truly patriotic spirit, an energetic character, profound skill in diplomacy (5), and a fidelity to his engagements, as unusual as it was honourable in those days of weakness and tergiversation.

His accession to office was soon followed by an evident increase of vigour

(1) Thib. i. 37. Carnot, 255. Dinn. iv. 5, 6.

(2) Their names were at first Barrère, Delmas Bréard, Cambou, Debry, Danton, Guyton-Morveau, Treillard, and Lacroix.—See Hard. ii. 772.

(3) Jom. iii. 6. Hard. ii. 278.

(4) Hard. ii. 259, 260.

(5) Hard. ii. 260, 269.

And first Measures in diplomatic measures. Pressing notes to the inferior German Powers brought about the equipment of that tardy and inefficient force, the Germanic Contingents; while a menacing proclamation from the 22d March 1793. Diet of Ratisbon prohibited all circulation of French assignats or revolutionary writings, and ordered the immediate departure from their territory of all subjects of that country who could not give a sufficient reason for their residence. But though these measures might be well calculated to prevent the inundation of the empire with democratic principles, it was with very different weapons that the formidable army which had grown up out of the agonies of the Republic required to be combated (1).

Incipient divisions of Prussia and Austria. At the time, however, that the zeal of Austria was thus warming in the common cause, that of Prussia was rapidly cooling; and to the lukewarmness and indifference of this power in the contest with France, more than to any other cause, the extraordinary success which for some years attended the Republican arms is to be ascribed. The selfish ambition of the cabinets of Vienna, St.-Petersburg, and Berlin, was the cause of this unhappy disunion. Hardly was the ink of the treaty of the 14th July with Great-Britain dry, when the hoisting of the Austrian flag on the walls of Valenciennes and Condé opened the eyes of the Prussian Ministry to the projects of aggrandizement which were entertained by the Imperial cabinet, and which Thugut supported with his whole talents and influence. Irritated and chagrined at this prospect of material accession of power to their dreaded rival, the cabinet of Berlin derived some consolation from the completion of their arrangements with the Empress Catherine for the partition of Poland, in virtue of which the Prussian force had recently taken possession of Dantzic, with its noble harbour and fortifications, besides Thorn, and a large circum-jacent territory, to the no small annoyance of Austria, which saw itself excluded from all share in the projected spoliation. Nor was Russia likely to be a more disinterested combatant in the common cause; for she, too, was intent on the work of partition, and had already inundated the Duchy of Warsaw with troops, with the fixed design of rendering it the frontiers of the Moscovite dominions. Thus, at the moment when the evident approach of peril to the national independence was closing those frightful divisions which had hitherto paralyzed the strength of France, the Allied powers, intent on separate projects of aggrandizement, were rapidly relaxing the bonds of the confederacy; and engaging in the most iniquitous partition recorded in modern times, at the very time when that vast power was arising, which was so soon destined to make them all tremble for their own possessions (2).

Recognition of the Maritime Law by the Allies. This stage of the contest was marked by an important step in the maritime relations of Europe, which afterwards became of the utmost moment in the important discussions on neutral rights which took place at the close of the century. The Empress Catherine publicly announced the departure of Russia from the principles of the armed neutrality, and her resolution to act on those usages which England had uniformly maintained in conformity with the practice of all belligerent states, formed the common naval code of Europe. She equipped a fleet of twenty-five ships of the line, which was destined to cruize in the Baltic and North Seas, and whose instructions were "to seize all vessels, without distinction, navigating under the flag of the French Republic, or that of any other state which they

(1) Hard. ii. 264, 274.

(2) Hard. ii. 332, 333.



might assume; and also to *arrest every neutral vessel* destined and loaded for a French harbour,—oblige them to retrace their steps, or make for the nearest neutral harbour which might suit their convenience." These instructions were publicly announced to the Prussian, Swedish, and Danish Courts (1); and although the Cabinet of Copenhagen, which early perceived the advantages of the lucrative neutral commerce, which the general hostility was likely to throw into their hands, at first made some difficulties, yet they at length yielded, and all the maritime powers agreed to revert to the usages of war in regard to neutrals which had existed prior to the armed Neutrality in 1780. By a declaration issued on June 8, the British Government enjoined its naval commanders to search all neutral vessels bound for France for articles contraband of war; and Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia, successively adopted the same principles. The latter power, in particular, declared, in a note to Count Bernstorff, intended to obviate the objections of the Cabinet of Denmark, "His Majesty the King of Prussia, who has no interest but what is common with the King of Great-Britain, can make no objection to the principles which circumstances have caused the Court of London to adopt relative to the commerce of neutrals during the present war with France. The undersigned, in acceding absolutely and without limitation to all the demands of the British ambassador, obeys the express injunctions of his Court, in the most solemn manner, in order to prove to the world the perfect concert which in that, as in all other respects, prevails between the King of Prussia and the King of Great-Britain." Thus, how loudly soever the maritime powers may have demanded a new maritime code as a restraint on the hostility of others when they are neutral, they were willing enough to revert to the old usages, when they in their turn became the belligerent parties (2).

Abundant  
Policy of the  
Allies.

If the conduct of the Allies had been purposely intended to develop the formidable military strength which had grown up in the French Republic, they could not have adopted measures better calculated to effect their object than were actually pursued. Four months of success, which might have been rendered decisive, had been wasted in blamable inactivity; after having broken the frontier line of fortresses, and defeated the covering army of France in a pitched battle, when within fifteen marches of Paris, and at the head of a splendid army of 130,000 men, they thought fit to separate their forces, and instead of pushing on to the centre of the Republican power, pursue independent plans of aggrandizement. The English, with their Allies, amounting to above thirty-five thousand men, moved towards Dunkirk, so long the object of their maritime jealousy, while forty-five thousand of the Imperialists sat down before Le Quesnoy, and

English in-  
sist on di-  
viding the  
Army.

(1) M. Bernstorff declared to the Danish Cabinet, after announcing these instructions: "Her Imperial Majesty, in issuing such orders, cannot be supposed to have in the slightest degree deviated from the beneficent system, which is calculated to secure the interests of neutrals in war, seeing that it is noways applicable to the present circumstances. The French Revolutionists, after having overturned every thing in their own country, and bathed their impious hands in the blood of their sovereign, have, by a public decree, declared themselves the allies of every people who shall commit similar atrocities, and has followed this up by attacking with an armed force all its neighbours. Neutrality cannot exist with such a power, except in so far as it may be assumed from prudential considerations. Should there be any states whose situation does not permit

them to make such efficacious efforts as the greater powers in the common cause, the least that can be required of them is, that they shall make use of such means as are evidently at their disposal, by abstaining from all commerce or intercourse with these disturbers of the public peace. Her Imperial Majesty feels herself the more entitled to exact these sacrifices, as she has cheerfully submitted to them herself: being well aware of the disastrous effects which would ensue to the common interest, if, by reason of a free transport of provisions and naval stores, the enemy were put in possession of the means of prolonging and nourishing the contest. —See Ann. Reg. xxxiii. State Papers, No. 41. and Hard. ii. 337, 341.

(2) Hard. ii. 334, 341.

the remainder of their vast army was broken into detachments to preserve the communications (1).

**The English besiege Dunkirk, the Austrians Le Quesnoy**  
 From this ruinous division may be dated all the subsequent disasters of the campaign. Had they held together, and pushed on vigorously against the masses of the enemies' forces, now severely weakened and depressed by defeat, there cannot be a doubt that the object of the war would have been gained. The decrees for levying the population *en masse* were not passed by the Convention for some weeks afterwards, and the forces they produced were not organized for three months. The mighty genius of Carnot had not as yet assumed the helm of affairs; the Committee of Public Safety had not yet acquired its terrible energy; every thing promised great results to vigorous and simultaneous operations. It was a resolution of the English cabinet in opposition to the declared and earnest wish of Cobourg and all the Allied Generals which occasioned this fatal division. The impartial historian must confess with a sigh, that it was British interests which here interfered with the great objects of the war, and that by compelling the English contingent to separate for the siege of Dunkirk, England contributed to postpone, for twenty years, its glorious termination. Posterity has had ample room to lament the error; a war of twenty years deeply checkered with disaster; the addition of six hundred millions to the public debt; the sacrifice of millions of brave men, may be in a great degree traced to this unhappy resolution (2).

**Le Quesnoy Falls. Nov. 11**  
 The Austrians were successful in their enterprise. After fifteen days of open trenches, Le Quesnoy capitulated, and the garrison, consisting of four thousand men, were made prisoners of war. The efforts of the Republicans to raise the siege terminated in nothing but disasters. Two columns of ten thousand men each, destined to disquiet the besiegers, were routed, and in one of them, a square of three thousand men broken, and totally destroyed by the Imperial cavalry (3).

**But the Siege of Dunkirk is raised.**  
 But a very different fate awaited the British besieging army. The corps under the command of the Duke of York, consisting of twenty thousand British and Hanoverians, was raised, by the junction of a body of Austrians under Alvinzi, to thirty-seven thousand men. This force was inadequate to the enterprise, exposed as it was to attack from the main body of the French army. On the 18th August, the Duke of York arrived in the neighbourhood of Lincelles, where, after an obstinate engagement a strong redoubt was carried by the English Guards, and twelve pieces of cannon taken. At the same time, the Dutch troops advanced under Marshal Freytag, and driving the enemy from his positions near Dunkirk, the Allies advanced to within a league of the place, and encamped at Furnes, extending from that place to the sand-hills on the sea shore. The place was immediately summoned, but the governor returned a determined refusal (4).

Sensible of the importance of this fortress, which, if gained by the English, would have given then an easy inlet into the heart of France, the Republicans made the most vigorous efforts to raise the siege (5). This was the more ne-

(1) Jom. iv. 35. Hard. ii. 401. Th. v. 218, 219.  
 (2) Jom. iv. 26, 27, 28. Toul. iv. 49 Ann. Reg. 1793 377. Jom. iv. 37. Hard. ii. 346, 347, 350.  
 (3) Jom. iv. 41.  
 (4) Ann. Reg. 1793, 379, 380. Jom. iv. 41, 45.  
 (5) "It is not," said Carnot, in a despatch to Rouchard, "merely in a military point of view, that Dunkirk is so important: it is far more so, because

national honour is involved in its relief. Pitt cannot prevent the Revolution which is approaching in England, but by gaining that town to indemnify that country for the expenses of the war. Accumulate, therefore, immense forces in Flanders, and drive the enemy from its plains; the decisive point of the contest lies there.—Hard. ii. 365.

cessary, because the works of the place were in the most deplorable state when the Allies appeared before it, and the garrison, consisting only of three thousand men, was totally insufficient to defend the town; and if the bombarding flotilla had arrived from England at the same time with the besieging army, there can be no doubt that it would immediately have fallen. Immense preparations were making at Woolwich for the siege, and eleven new battalions had been embarked in the Thames for the besieging army; but such was the tardiness of their movements, that not a vessel appeared in sight at the harbour of Dunkirk, and the mistress of the seas had the mortification to find her land forces severely harassed by discharges from the contemptible gun-boats of the enemy. The delays of the English in these operations proved what novices they were in the art of war, and how little they were aware of the importance of time in military movements. Above three weeks were employed in preparations for the siege, a delay which enabled the French to bring up from the distant frontier of the Moselle the forces who ultimately raised the siege (1).

The French rulers did not discover the same inactivity. Following the wise course of accumulating overwhelming forces upon the decisive point, they brought thirty-five thousand men, by forced marches, from the armies of the Rhine and the Moselle, and placed the army destined to raise the siege, consisting by this addition of nearly fifty thousand men, under the command of General Houchard. The investment not having been completed, he succeeded in throwing ten thousand additional troops, on whose fidelity reliance could be placed, into the garrison; while the covering army, consisting of twenty thousand Dutch and Austrians, under the command of Marshal Freytag, was threatened by an attacking force of nearly double its amount (2).

While the Republicans were thus adopting the system of concentrating their forces, the Allies, by the expansion of theirs, gave it every possible chance of success. An hundred thousand men, dispersed round Le Quesnoy, and extending from the sea to the Moselle, guarded all the entrances into the Netherlands, and covered a line two hundred miles in length. Thus, 120,000 men were charged at once with the covering of two sieges, the maintenance of that immense line, and the protection of all Flanders, from an enterprising enemy, possessing an interior line of communication, and already acting upon the principle of accumulating an overwhelming force upon the decisive point (3).

The situation of the Allied covering army was such, as to give to a vigorous attack, by an imposing mass of assailants, every chance of success. Freytag's corps of observation was, in the end, not posted at Furnes, so as to protect the rear of the besiegers, but at a considerable distance in front of it, in order to prevent any communication between the besieged and the interior of France; while the Dutch, under the Prince of Orange, were at the distance of three days' march at Menin, and incapable of rendering any assistance; and the Duke of York's besieging force lay exposed to an attack between these dispersed bodies. The Committee of Public Safety had enjoined Houchard to adopt that plan, to throw himself, with forty thousand men, between the three corps, and fall successively on Freytag, the Prince of Orange, and the

(1) Th. v. 220. Jom. iv. 46. Ann. Reg. 1793, 380. Hard. ii. 366.

(2) Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 380. Th. v. 220, 230. Jom. iv. 51.

(3) Th. v. 238, 239.

Duke of York; and Napoléon would unquestionably have done so if he had been at the head of the army of Italy, and signalized Dunkirk, in all probability, by as decisive success as Rivoli or Arcola. But that audacious mode of proceeding could not be expected from a second in command, and the principles on which it was founded were not yet understood, nor were his troops adequate to so bold an enterprise. He contented himself, therefore, with marching against the front of Freytag, with a view to throw him back on the besieging force, and raise the siege, instead of interposing between them and destroying both. The object to be thus attained was important, and its achievement proved the salvation of France, but it fell very far short of the great success expected by the French government; and the failure of the Republican general to enter into the spirit of their orders, at length brought him to the scaffold (1).

Sept. 5 to 7. The attack was commenced on Marshal Freytag in the beginning of September. A series of engagements took place, from the 5th to the 7th September, between the French and the covering army, which terminated unfavourably to the Allies; and at length, on the morning of the 8th, a decisive attack was made by General Houchard on the main body of the Austrians, consisting of nearly eighteen thousand men, near Hondscote, in which the latter were defeated with the loss of fifteen hundred men (2).

Meanwhile, the garrison of Dunkirk, acting in concert with the external army, made a vigorous sally on the besiegers, with forces superior to their own, and exposed them to the most imminent peril. The Duke of York, finding his flank exposed to the attacks of Houchard by the defeat of the covering force, justly deemed his situation too precarious to risk a farther stay in the lines, and on the night of the 8th, withdrew his besieging force, leaving fifty-two pieces of heavy artillery, and a large quantity of ammunition and baggage, to the conquerors (3).

Ruinous consequences of this Disaster. The consequences of this defeat proved ruinous to the whole campaign. It excited the most extravagant joy at Paris, and elevated the public spirit to a degree great in proportion to their former depression. The dislodging of a few thousand men at the extremity of the line, changed the face of the war from the German to the Mediterranean Sea. The Convention, relieved from the dread of immediate danger, and the peril of invasion, got time to mature its plans of foreign conquest, and organize the immense military preparations in the interior; and Fortune, weary of a party which threw away the opportunities of receiving her favours, passed over to the other side (4).

Republicans do not follow up their success with vigour. Houchard, however, did not improve his advantages as might have been expected. Instead of following up the plan of concentrating his forces upon a few points, he renewed the system of division, which had been so imprudently adopted by his adversaries. The forces of the Duke of York, in the camp to which he retired, being deemed too powerful for an immediate attack, he resolved to assail a corps of Dutch who were posted at Menin. A series of actions, with various success, in consequence ensued between the detached corps of the Allies, which kept up the communication between the Duke of York's army and the main body of the Imperialists under Prince Cobourg. On the one hand, the Dutch,

(1) Th. v. 239, 240. Hard, ii. 370, 371.

(2) Toul. iv. 53, 54. Jom. iv. 54, 60. Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 381. Th. v. 242, 243.

(3) Toul. iv. 53, 54. Jom. iv. 61. Ann. Reg.

1793, p. 381. Th. v. 243, 244.

(4) Toul. iv. 55. Th. v. 245.

overwhelmed by superior masses of the enemy, were defeated with the loss of two thousand men, and forty pieces of cannon; while, on the other, General Beaulieu totally routed the army of Houchard at Courtray, and drove him behind the Lys. Nor did the disaster rest there. The panic communicated Sept. 15. itself to all the camps, all the divisions; and the army which had lately raised the siege of Dunkirk, sought shelter in a promiscuous crowd under the cannon of Lille—a striking proof of the unfitness of the Republican levies as yet for field operations, and of the ease with which, by energetic operations in large masses at that period, the greatest successes might have been obtained by the numerous and disciplined armies of the Allies, if acting together or in concert, and led by an able commander (1).

And Houchard is arrested and executed. This last disaster proved fatal to General Houchard, already charged with culpable inactivity, in not following up the advantages at Hondscote, by an immediate attack upon the British force. Accused by his own officers, he was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal at Paris, condemned and executed. The English had sacrificed Admiral Byng for having suffered a defeat; the Romans had condemned Manlius for having fought in disobedience to the orders of the Senate; but this was the first instance in history of a victorious general having been put to death for gaining a success, which proved the salvation of his country (2).

The proceedings of the Convention against this unfortunate general, are chiefly interesting from the evidence they afford of the clear perception which those at the head of affairs had obtained of the principles in the military art, to which the subsequent successes of the Republican forces were chiefly owing. "For long," said Barrère, "the principle established by the great Frederick, has been recognized, that the best way to take advantage of the courage of the soldier, is to accumulate the troops in particular points in large masses. Instead of doing this, you have divided them into separate detachments, and the generals intrusted with their command have generally had to combat superior forces. The Committee of Public Safety, fully aware of the danger, had sent the most positive instructions to the generals to fight in large masses; you have disregarded their orders, and, in consequence, reverses have followed (3)." From these expressions, it is not difficult to recognize the influence which the master mind of Carnot had already acquired in the direction of military affairs.

Maubeuge is besieged. 29th Sept. To compensate so many reverses, the Allies at length sat down before Maubeuge; an important fortress, the possession of which would have opened the plains of St.-Quentin and the capital to invasion, and which, undertaken at an earlier period, and by the main strength of their forces, would have determined, in all probability, the success of the war. Landrecy was already blockaded, and the French troops, avowedly inferior in the field, were all concentrated in intrenched camps within their own frontier. A vigorous effort was indispensable, to prevent the Allies from carrying these strongholds, and taking up their winter quarters, without opposition, in the French territory (4).

Jourdan takes the Command of the Army. In these alarming circumstances, the Committee of Public Safety alone did not despair of the fortunes of the Republic. Trusting with confidence in their own energy, and the immense multitudes of the

(1) Jom. iv. 55, 65, 66. Ann. Reg. 1793, 383.

(3) Jom. iv. 69. Toul. iv. 130.

Th. v. 246, 247. Hard. ii. 269.

(4) Toul. iv. 133, 134. Jom. iv. 112, 114.

(2) Jom. iv.

levies ordered, they took the most vigorous measures for the public defence, and, by incessantly urging on the new conscripts, soon raised the forces in the different intrenched camps, on the Flemish frontier, to 130,000 men. Great part, it is true, formed but a motley group; peasants, without arms or uniforms, fiercely debating every question of politics, forming themselves into battalions, and choosing their own officers, presented a force little competent to face, in the open field, the regular forces of Austria and the Confederation. But the possession of so many fortified towns and intrenched camps gave them the means of organizing and disciplining the tumultuary masses, and enabled the regular troops, amounting to 100,000 men, to keep the field. At the head of the whole was placed General JOURDAN, a young officer, hitherto untried, but who, placed between victory and the scaffold, had sufficient confidence in his own talents to accept the perilous alternative (1).

At the same time, the most energetic measures were taken by the Committee of Public Safety. All France was declared in a state of siege, and the authorities authorized to take all the steps necessary to provide for the public defence in such an emergency. "The revolutionary laws," said Robespierre, "must be executed with rapidity; delay and inactivity have been the cause of our reverses. Thenceforward, the time allowed for the execution of the

Oct. 10. laws must be fixed, and delay punished with death." St.-Just drew a sombre picture of the state of the Republic, and the necessity of striving vigorously against the manifold dangers which surrounded them. Having excited the highest degree of terror in the Assembly, they obtained their consent to the following resolutions:—That the subsistence requisite for each department, should be accurately estimated, and all the superfluity placed at the disposal of the State, and subjected to forced requisitions, either for the armies, the cities, or departments, that stood in need of it: that these requisitions should be exclusively regulated by a commission appointed for that purpose by the Convention: that Paris should be provisioned for a year; a tribunal instituted for the trial of all those who should commit any offence against these measures, destined to provide for the public subsistence: that the government of France should be declared revolutionary, till the conclusion of a general peace, and, until that arrived, a dictatorial power be invested in the Committee of Public Safety, and the Convention; and that a revolutionary army, consisting of six thousand men, and twelve hundred cannoneers, should be established at Paris, and cantoned there at the expense of the more opulent among the citizens. It was proposed in the Cordeliers, that to this should be added a provision for the establishment of a moving guillotine, to be attached to every army; but this was not adopted by the Convention. The revolutionary army was instantly raised, and composed of the most ardent Jacobins; and the Commission of Subsistence installed in its important and all-powerful sovereignty (2).

The force of the Allies was still above 120,000 strong; and displayed a numerous and splendid array of cavalry, to which there was nothing comparable on the side of the Republicans. But after taking into account the blockading and besieging forces, and those stationed at a distance, they could not bring above sixty thousand into the field. This army was, early in October, concentrated between Maubeuge and Avesnes, where they awaited the approach of the enemy destined to raise the siege (3).

(1) Toul. iv. 134. Jom. iv. 114, 115, 116.

(2) Th. v. 278, 280.

(3) Toul. iv. 135. Jom. iv. 121.

Firm conduct of the Convention.

This measure was now become indispensably necessary, as the condition of the garrison of Maubeuge was daily growing more desperate, and the near approach of the besiegers' batteries had spread terror in the city, and discouragement among the soldiers. Imitating the firmness of the Roman Senate, the Convention had sold the estates of the emigrants on which the Allies were encamped, and sent the most peremptory orders to Jourdan, to attack, without delay, the enemy's force, and drive him out of the French territory. The Duke of York, too, hearing of the concentration of the Republican force, was rapidly advancing with above twenty-five thousand men, and unless the attack was speedily made, it was certain that his force would be joined to the Allied Army (1).

Jourdan advances to raise the Siege.

Impelled by so many motives, Jourdan approached the Austrian position, the key of which was the village of Wattignies. After some skirmishing on the 14th, a general battle took place on the 15th October, in which, after various success, the Republicans were worsted

Battle of Wattignies 16th Oct. 1793.

with the loss of twelve hundred men. Instructed by this failure, that a change of the method of attack was indispensable, Jourdan, in the night, accumulated his forces against the decisive point, and at break of day, on the 16th, assailed Wattignies with three columns, while a concentric fire of artillery shattered the troops who defended it. In the midst of the roar of cannon, which were discharged with uncommon vigour, the Republican airs could be distinctly heard by the Austrians, which rose from the French lines. The village was speedily carried by this skilful concentration of force, while, at the same time, the appearance of the reserve of Jourdan on the left flank of the Allies, completed the discouragement of Cobourg, and induced a general retreat, after sustaining a loss of six thousand men. This resolution was unfortunate and unnecessary, for, on other points, his army had been eminently successful, and the arrival of the Duke of York, who was within a day's march, would have enabled him to maintain his position, and convert his partial into a total success. It is related in Roman History, that, on one occasion, after a doubtful battle, some god called out in the night, that they had lost one man less than their enemies, and in consequence they kept their ground, and gained all the advantages of a victory : how often does such tenacious firmness convert an incipient disaster into important advantage (2).

Retreat of the Allies, and Raising of the Siege.

The raising of the siege, and retreat of the Allies beyond the Sambre, exposed to view the gigantic works which they had constructed for the reduction of the city, and which, with a little more vigour, on their part, in concentrating their forces, would undoubtedly have proved successful. As it was, the success of the Republicans, on this point, counterbalanced the alarming intelligence received from other quarters, and allayed a dangerous ferment which was commencing in the capital (3).

The advantage gained by the Republicans in this action, proved how incompetent the old and methodical tactics of the Imperialists were to contend with the new and able system which Carnot had introduced into their armies, and which their immense levies enabled them to execute with reckless audacity. Jourdan had nearly sixty thousand men to raise the siege. By leaving only fifteen thousand to man the works, Cobourg might have opposed

(1) *Jom. iv.* 118, 120, 129.

(3) *Toul. iv.* 136, 137. *Th. v.* 328, 332. *Jom. iv.*

(2) *Hard. ii.* 406, 409. *Jom. iv.* 134, 135. *Th.* 130, 135.

*v.* 328, 330. *Toul. iv.* 136, 138.

to him an equal force; and an action, under such circumstances, from the great inferiority of the French in discipline, would infallibly have led to a defeat, which would speedily have brought about the reduction of the town. Instead of which, by leaving thirty-five thousand round the town, he exposed himself with only thirty thousand men to the shock of sixty thousand Republicans, and ultimately was compelled to raise the siege (1).

Conclusion  
of the Cam-  
paign in  
Flanders:  
both Parties  
go into Win-  
ter Quar-  
ters.

Nothing more of importance was undertaken in Flanders before the close of the campaign; a movement of the French, threatening the right of the Allies towards the sea, was not persisted in, and, after various unimportant changes, both parties went into winter quarters. The headquarters of Cobourg were established at Bavay; those of the Republicans at Guicé, where a vast intrenched camp was formed for the protection and disciplining of the revolutionary masses, which were daily arriving for the army. Insatiable in their expectations of success, the Committee of Public Safety removed Jourdan from the supreme command, and conferred it on PICHEGRU, an officer distinguished in the campaign on the Rhine, a favourite of Robespierre and St.-Just, and possessed of the talent, activity, and enterprise suited to those perilous times, when the risk was greater to a commander from domestic tyranny, than foreign warfare (2).

Campaign  
on the  
Rhine. In-  
activity of  
the Prus-  
sians.

After the capture of Mayence, the Imperialists, reinforced by forty thousand excellent troops, who had been employed in the siege of that city, could have assembled 100,000 men, for offensive operations in the plains of the Palatinate, while those of the enemy did not exceed eighty thousand. Every thing promised success to vigorous operations; but the Allies, paralyzed by intestine divisions, remained in an inexplicable state of inactivity, and separated their fine army into four corps, which were placed opposite to the lengthened lines of their adversaries. The Prussians were chiefly to blame for this torpor: they had secretly adopted the resolution, now that Mayence, the barrier of Northern Germany, had fallen, to contribute no farther efficient aid to the prosecution of the war. For two months they remained there in perfect inactivity, the jealousy of the sovereigns, concerning the affairs of Poland, being equalled by the rivalry of the generals for the command of the armies. Both monarchies had bitter cause afterwards to lament this inaction; for never again were their own armies on the Rhine so formidable, or those of the Republicans in such a state of disorganization (3).

Wearied at length with the torpor of their opponents, and pressed by the reiterated orders of the Convention to undertake something decisive, the French General, Moreau, who commanded the army of the Moselle, com-  
Sept. 14. menced an attack on the Prussian corps posted at Permasins. The Republican columns advanced with intrepidity to the attack, but when they reached the Prussian redoubts, a terrible storm of grape arrested their advance; and at the same time their flanks were turned by the Duke of Brunswick, and a heavy fire of artillery carried disorder into their masses, which soon fell back, and precipitated themselves in confusion into the neighbouring ravines. In this affair the Republicans lost four thousand men, and twenty-two pieces of cannon, a disaster which might have

French de-  
feated at  
Permasins.

(1) Th. v. 332.

(2) Jom. iv. 134, 148.

(3) Jom. iv. 75, 78, 91. Hard. ii. 342.



proved fatal to the campaign, had it been as much improved as it was neglected by the Allied Commanders (1).

The King of Prussia, a few days after, left the army to repair to Poland, in order to pursue, in concert with Russia, his plans of aggrandizement at the expense of that unhappy country; and the Allies, having at length agreed on a plan of operations, resumed offensive operations. The French occupied the ancient and celebrated lines of Weissenberg, constructed in former times for Oct. 12.

the protection of the Rhenish frontier from German invasion. They stretched from the town of Lauterburg on the Rhine, through the village of Weissenberg to the Vosges Mountains, and thus closed all access from that side into Alsace. For four months that they had been occupied by the Republicans, all the resources of art had been employed in strengthening them. The recent successes of the Allies had brought them to the extreme-left of this position, and they formed the design of attacking it from left to right, and forcing

Their lines  
are stormed  
at Weissen-  
berg.

an abandonment of the whole intrenchments. A simultaneous assault was made by the Prussians, under the Duke of Brunswick, on the left of the lines, by the defiles in the Vosges Mountains, while

the Austrians, under Prince Waldeck, crossed the Rhine, and turned the right, and Wurmser himself, with the main body, endeavoured to force the

They are to-  
tally routed.

centre. The attack on the right by Lauterburg, obtained only a momentary success; but Wurmser carried several redoubts in the centre, and soon got possession of Weissenberg; and the left having been turned and forced back, the whole army retired in confusion, and some of the fugitives fled as far as Strasburg. Such was the tardiness of the Allies, that the French lost only one thousand men in this general rout, which, if duly improved, might have occasioned the ruin of their whole army (2).

But this important success, which once more opened the territory of the Republic to a victorious enemy, and spread the utmost consternation through the towns of Alsace, led to no results; and by developing the designs of Austria upon this province, contributed to widen the breach between that power and her wavering ally. Although, therefore, a powerful reaction commenced among the nobles in Alsace, and a formidable party was formed in Strasburg, to favour the imperial projects, nothing material was undertaken by their armies. Wurmser wasted in festivity and rejoicings the precious moments of incipient terror; the Convention got time to recover from their alarm, and the Committee of Public Safety took the most energetic measures to restore the democratic fervour in the shaken districts. A Revolutionary force, under the command of a ferocious leader, traversed the province, confiscating without mercy the property of the suspected individuals, and spreading, by the multitude of their arrests, the fear of death before every individual. "Marat," said Bandet, "has only demanded 200,000 heads; were they a million, we would furnish them." To take advantage of the ferment occasioned by those menaces, Wurmser advanced to the neighbourhood of Strasburg, where the whole constituted authorities offered to surrender it to the Imperialists, in the name of Louis XVII. The Austrian Commander, however, fettered by orders from Vienna, which prohibited him from doing any thing which might prejudice their system of methodical conquest, declined to take possession of the city on these terms, and moved

(1) Jom. iv. 88, 91. Toul. iv. 138, 140.

(2) Hard. ii. 424, 425. Toul. iv. 140, 141, 14 Jom. iv. 96, 97, 104.

the Prussians to Saverne, in order to force back the Republicans who were accumulating on that point. This project, however, proved unsuccessful; the Prussians were driven back; and Wurmser, unable to undertake the siege of Strasburg by force, was obliged to withdraw, and confine his operations to the blockade of Landau and siege of Fort Vauban, which capitulated with its garrison of three thousand men on the 14th November. The inhabitants of Strasburg, thus abandoned to their fate, experienced the whole weight of Republican vengeance; seventy persons of the most distinguished families were put to death, while terror and confiscation reinstated the sway of the Convention over that unhappy province. No sooner was the extent of the conspiracy ascertained, than St.-Just and Le Bas were despatched by the Convention, and speedily put in force the terrific energy of the Revolution. The blood of the Royalists immediately flowed in torrents; it was a sufficient ground for condemnation, that any inhabitant had remained in the village occupied by the Allies; and a fourth of the families of the province, decimated by the guillotine, fled into the neighbouring districts of Switzerland, and were speedily enrolled in the tables of proscription (1).

The secession of Prussia from the confederacy now became daily more and more evident. Wurmser in vain endeavoured to rouse them to any combined movements; orders from the Cabinet constrained the Duke of Brunswick to a line of conduct, as prejudicial to his fame as a commander, as it was injurious to the character of his country. On his return to Berlin, Frederic-William was assailed by so many representations from his ministers as to the deplorable state of the finances, and the exhaustion of the national strength, in a contest foreign to the real interests of the nation, at the very time when the affairs of Poland required their undivided attention, and the greatest possible display of force in that quarter, that he at first adopted the resolution to recall all his troops from the Rhine, except the small contingent which he was bound to furnish as a Prince of the empire; and orders to that effect were actually transmitted to the Prussian General. The Cabinet of Vienna, informed of their danger, made the most pressing remonstrances against such an untimely and ruinous defection, in which they were so well seconded by those of London and St.-Petersburg, that this resolution was rescinded, and in consideration of a large Austrian subsidy, engaged to continue the contest. But orders were nevertheless given to the Duke of Brunswick to temporize as much as possible, and engage the Prussian troops in no serious enterprise, or any conquest which might turn to the advantage of the Austrians: the effect of which soon appeared in the removal of the Prussian mortars and cannon from the lines before Landau, at the moment when the bombardment was going on with the greatest prospect of success. Shortly after they withdrew so large a part of the blockading force, that the garrison was enabled to communicate freely with the adjacent country (2).

Meanwhile the Committee of Public Safety, very different from their tardy and divided opponents, did not confine their views to the subjugation of the Royalists in Alsace. They aspired to the complete deliverance of the Republican territory from the enemy's forces. To raise the blockade of Landau, thirty thousand men from the armies of the Moselle and the Rhine,

(1) Hard. ii. 425, 426. Toul. iv. 143, 144, 186.  
Th. vi. 48, 49. Jom. iv. 104, 106, 111, 150.

(2) Hard. ii. 425, 431.

Disunion of  
the Allies.

were placed under the orders of Pichegru, who were destined to penetrate the Allied lines between the cantonments of the Austrian and Prussian forces; and these were supported by thirty-five thousand under General Hoche, who advanced from the side of La Sarre. After some preparatory movements, and various success, and many partial actions, the Republicans attacked the covering army of the Duke of Brunswick, in great force,

Dec. 26.

on the morning of the 26th December, who were in position near the castle of Geisberg, a little in front of Weissenberg. Such was the dissension between the two commanders, in consequence of the evident reluctance of the Prussians to engage, that a warm altercation took place between them, in presence of their respective officers, on the field of battle. The result, as might have been expected, was, that the

Allies driven  
over the  
Rhine, and  
Siege of  
Landau  
raised.

Allies, vigorously attacked in their centre, were driven from their positions; and after some ineffectual attempts to make a stand on the left bank of the Rhine, their whole army, in great confusion, crossed to the right bank, at Philipsberg, after raising the blockade of Landau, leaving their recent conquest of Fort Vauban to its fate, and completely evacuating in that quarter the French territory. Spire and Worms were speedily reconquered,

Jan. 19. 1794.

and Fort Vauban soon after evacuated. The Republican armies rapidly advancing, appeared before the gates of Mannheim, and Germany, so recently victorious, began to tremble for its own frontier (1).

These important results demonstrated the superior military combination which was now exerted on the part of the French to that of the Allies. Forty thousand Prussians and Saxons were in a state of inaction on the other side of the Vosges Mountains, while the Austrians, overmatched by superior and concentrated forces, were driven across the Rhine. The French accumulated forces from different armies, to break through one weakly defended point, while the Allies were in such a state of discord (2), that they could not, even in the extremest peril, render any effectual assistance to each other (3). It was not difficult to foresee what would be the result of such a contest (4).

Campaign on  
the Spanish  
frontier.

The campaign on the Pyrenean frontier during this year, was not characterised by any event of importance. At the first breaking out of the war, in February, the Spanish Government made vigorous exertions

(1) Toul, iv. 221. 227. Jom. iv. 154, 160, 177. Th. vi. 48, 49.

(2) Such was the dissension between the Austrians and Prussians, that their respective commanders published mutual recriminations against each other, and fought duels in support of their respective sides of the question.—Hard. ii. 442.

(3) Hard. ii. 439, 441. Jom. iv. 177.

(4) So manifestly were the divisions of the Allies and the defection of the Prussians, the cause of all the disasters of the campaign on the German frontier, that the Duke of Brunswick himself did not hesitate to ascribe them to that cause. On 24th January 1794, he wrote to Prince Louis of Prussia in these terms: "I have been enveloped in circumstances as distressing as they were extraordinary, which have imposed upon me the painful necessity of acting as I have done. What a misfortune that external and internal dissensions should so frequently have paralyzed the movement of the armies, at the very time when the greatest activity was necessary! If after the fall of Mayence they had fallen on Houchard, whom they would have beaten, they would have prevented the march of troops to the

north; and by consequence the checks of Dunkirk and Maubeuge; Sarre-Louis, ill provisioned and destitute at that period of any shelter from a bombardment, would have fallen in fifteen days. Alsace thus would have been turned by the Sarre: the capture of the lines of Lantern would have been more solid: and if the Republican army of the Rhine had been by that means separated from that of the Moselle, Landau would infallibly have fallen. I implore you to use your efforts to prevent the undue separation of the army into detachments; when this is the case, weak at every point, it is liable to be cut up in detail. At Mayence the fruits of the whole war were lost; and there is no hope that a third campaign will repair the disasters of the two preceding. The same causes will divide the Allied Powers which have hitherto divided them: the movements of the armies will suffer from them as they have suffered: their march will be embarrassed, retarded, prevented; and the delay in the re-establishment of the Prussian army, unavoidable perhaps from political causes, will become the cause in the succeeding campaign of incalculable disasters.—See Hard. ii. 444, 448.

to increase their armies, and the zeal and patriotism of the inhabitants soon supplied the deficiencies of the military establishment, and enabled them to put two considerable forces on foot. Two armies were formed: one of thirty thousand men, destined to invade Roussillon; the other of twenty-five thousand, to penetrate by the Bidassoa, on the side of Bayonne (1).

The Republican army on the western entrance of the Pyrenees, occupied a line from St.-Jean-Pied-de-Port to the mouth of the Bidassoa, strengthened by three intrenched camps, while the Spaniards were stationed on the heights of St.-Marcial, the destined theatre of honourable achievement to their arms

April 14. in a more glorious war. On the 14th April, the Spaniards, from their position, opened a vigorous fire on the French line, and during the confusion occasioned by it among their opponents, crossed the Bidassoa, and carried a fort which was soon after abandoned. This attack was only the prelude to a more decisive one, which took place on

May 1. the 1st May when the French were driven from one of their camps with the loss of fifteen pieces of cannon; and on the 6th June, they were driven

June 6. from another camp, and forced into St.-Jean-Pied-de-Port, with the loss of all the cannon and ammunition which it contained. After these disasters, the Republican commander was indefatigable in his endeavours to restore the courage and discipline of his troops, and deeming them at length sufficiently experienced for offensive operations, he made a general attack, on the 29th August, on the posts which the Spaniards had fortified on the French territory, but was repulsed with considerable loss, and disabled from undertaking any movement of consequence for the remainder of the campaign (2).

Operations of more importance took place, during the same campaign on the eastern side. The Spaniards under Don Ricardos, in the middle of April, invaded Roussillon, and on the 21st, a small body having gained an advantage over an equal number of French, this was followed soon after by a general attack on the French camp, which ended

May 18. in the defeat of the Republicans. Soon after the forts of Bellegrade and Villa Franca were taken, and Ricardos, pursuing his advantages,

Aug. 29. on the 29th August attacked a large body of French at Millas, who were totally defeated, with the loss of fifteen pieces of cannon. The result of this was, that the invaders passed Perpignan, and interrupted the communication between Languedoc and Roussillon (3).

But the Convention, alarmed at the rapid progress of the Spaniards, at length took the most vigorous measures to reinforce their armies; and the energetic government of the Committee of Public Safety restored success to the Republican standards. Two divisions of the

Sept. 17. French, about fifteen thousand strong, were directed to move against the Spaniards under Don Juan Courten, who had not above six thousand men at Peyrestortes, and their attack was combined with so much skill, that the enemy were assailed in front, both flanks and rear, at the same

Their defeat. time. After a gallant defence, the Spaniards were forced to commence a retreat, which, though conducted for some time in good order, at length was converted into a flight, during which they lost one thousand men

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 396.

(2) Jom. iv. 273, 282. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 397, 398.

(3) Jom. iv. 241, 243. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 399.

killed, and fifteen hundred prisoners, besides all their artillery and camp equipage (1).

Sept. 22.  
Battle of  
Truillas,  
and Defeat  
of the  
French.

Elated by this success, the Republicans proposed a general attack upon the Spanish army, which took place at Truillas. Twenty thousand chosen troops, divided into three columns, advanced against the Spanish camp. After an obstinate resistance, that which attacked the centre, under the command of Dagobert, carried the intrenchments, and was on the point of gaining a glorious victory, when Courten, coming up with the Spanish reserve, prolonged the combat, and gave time for Don Ricardos, who had defeated the attack on his left, to advance at the head of four regiments of cavalry, which decided the day. Three French battalions laid down their arms, and the remainder, formed into squares, retreated in spite of the utmost efforts of the Spanish cavalry, not, however, till they had sustained a loss of four thousand men and ten pieces of artillery (2).

Dagobert was immediately displaced from the supreme command for this disaster: and the Republicans, under Davoust, being shortly after reinforced by fifteen thousand men, levied under the decree of 23d August, Ricardos was constrained, notwithstanding his success, to remain upon the defensive. He retired, therefore, to a strong intrenched camp near Boulon, where he was attacked on the 3d October by the French forces. From that time to the beginning of December, a variety of actions took place, without any decisive advantage on either side, but without the Spanish troops ever being dis-

lodged from their position. At that period, Ricardos having been strongly reinforced, resolved to resume the offensive. Early on the 7th December, he disposed his troops in four columns, and having surprised the advanced posts, commenced an unexpected attack upon the French lines. The Republicans, many of whom were inexperienced levies, instantly took to flight, and the whole army was routed, with the loss of fort -six pieces of cannon, and two thousand five hundred men. The Spaniards followed up this success by another expedition against the town of Port-Vendre, which they carried, with all the artillery mounted on its defences; and soon after,

Collioure surrendered to their forces, with above eighty pieces of cannon, while the Marquis Amarallas overthrew the right, and carried such terror into the inexperienced forces of the Republicans, that many battalions disbanded themselves, and fled into the interior, and the whole fell back in confusion under the cannon of Perpignan.

By these repeated disasters, the French army was so much discouraged, that almost all the National Guards left their colours, and the General-in-Chief announced to the Convention, that he was only at the head of eight thousand men. Had the Spanish commander been aware of the state of his opponents, he might, by a vigorous attack, have completed their ruin before the reinforcements arrived from Toulon (3), which, in the beginning of the following month, restored the balance of the contending forces.

At the conclusion of the preceding campaign, the French remained masters of the territory and city of Nice. An expedition, projected by the Republicans against Sardinia, totally failed. When the season was so far advanced as to permit operations in the Maritime Alps, the

Campaign  
in the Mar-  
itime Alps.  
Feb. 14.

(1) *Jom. iv. 244, 245*

(2) *Jom. iv. 246, 248. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 399.*

(3) *Jom. iv. 251, 262, 270, 273. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 400.*

Piedmontese army, consisting of thirty thousand natives and ten thousand Austrians, was posted along their summits, with the centre at Saorgio, strongly fortified. In the beginning of June, the Republicans, twenty-five thousand strong, commenced an attack in five columns, but after some partial success, they resumed their positions, and being soon after weakened by detachments for the siege of Toulon, remained on the defensive till the end of July, when they made themselves masters of the Col d'Argentière and the Col de Sauteron, which excited the utmost alarm in the Court of Turin, and prevented them from sending those succours to the army in Savoy, which the powerful diversion occasioned by the siege of Lyon so evidently recommended (1).

The insurrection in Lyon offered an opportunity for establishing themselves in the south of France, which could hardly have been hoped for by the Allied Powers. Had sixty thousand regular troops descended from the Alps in Italy, and taken advantage of the effervescence which prevailed in Toulon, Marseille, and Lyon, the consequences might have been incalculable. But such were the divisions among the Allies, that this golden opportunity, never to recur, was neglected, and the Court of Turin contented themselves, during that un hoped-for diversion, with merely aiming at the expulsion of the French from the valleys of the Arc and the Isère. This was no difficult matter, as they were masters of the summits of Mont-Cenis and the Little St.-Bernard, and the French in the valleys beneath, were severely weakened by detachments for the siege of Lyon. In the middle of August, the Sardinian columns descended the ravines of St.-Jean de Maurienne and Moutiers, under the command of General Gordon, and after some

Feeble Ir-  
ruption on the  
side of Cham-  
béry.

Aug. 15.

Sept. 11.

trifling engagements, drove the Republicans from these narrow and winding valleys, and compelled them to take refuge under the cannon of Montmélian. But here terminated the success of their feeble invasion. Kellermann, hearing of the advance of the Sardinians, left the siege of Lyon to General Durnuy, and hastily returning to Chambéry, roused the National Guard to resist the enemy. At the moment that they were preparing to follow up their advantages, the French commander anticipated them by a brisk attack, and, after a feeble resistance, drove them from the whole ground they had gained, as far as the foot of Mont-Cenis. Thus a campaign, from which, if boldly conducted, the liberation of all the south-east of France might have been expected, terminated, after an ephemeral success, in ultimate disgrace (2).

But while the operations of the Allies in their vicinity were thus inefficient, the efforts of the French themselves were of a more decided and glorious character. The insurrection of 31st May, which subjected the legislature to the mob of Paris, and established the Reign of Terror through all France, excited the utmost indignation in the southern provinces. Marseille, Toulon, and Lyon, openly espoused the Girondist party; they were warmly attached to freedom, but it was that regulated freedom which provides for the protection of all, not that which subjects the better classes to the despotism of the lower: The discontents went on increasing till the middle of July, when Chalier and Riard, the leaders of the Jacobin Club, were put to death. From that moment they were declared in a state

Great Dis-  
content in  
the South of  
France.

(1) Jom. iv. 181, 184. Toul. iv. 216, 217, 218. Th. v. 38.

(2) Jom. iv. 195, 206. Bot. i. 291, 300—309. Th. v. 307, 310.

of insurrection; and the Girondist leaders, perceiving that the Royalist party had gained the ascendancy in the town, withdrew, and Precy was named to the command of the armed force. They immediately began to cast cannon, raise intrenchments, and make every preparation for a vigorous defence (1).

Abortive Insurrection at Marseille. This discontent first broke into open violence in Marseille. At the first intelligence, Kellermann despatched General Carteaux to prevent a corps of ten thousand men, from that city, from effecting a junction with the volunteers from Lyon. Had this junction been effected, there can be no doubt that the whole of the South of France would have thrown off the yoke of the Convention. But Carteaux, after overawing Avignon and Pont-d'Esprit, encountered the Marseillais corps, first at Salons, and afterwards at Septièmes, where he totally defeated it, and the following day entered Marseille. Terror instantly resumed its sway; the prisons were emptied; all the leaders of the Girondists thrown into confinement, and the guillotine, ever in the rear of the Republican armies, installed in bloody sovereignty (2).

A large proportion of the citizens of Marseille fled to Toulon, where they spread the most dismal accounts of the sufferings of their fellow-citizens, and the fate which awaited Toulon, if it fell into the hands of the Republicans. That rising seaport already possessed a population of twenty-five thousand souls, and was warmly opposed to the Revolution, from the suffering which had involved its population ever since its commencement; and the number of officers connected with the aristocracy who had enjoyed situations in the marine, under the ancient government. In the extremity to which they were reduced, threatened by the near approach of the Republican forces, and destitute of any adequate means of defence, the inhabitants saw no alternative but to open their harbour to the English fleet, which was cruising in the vicinity, and proclaim Louis XVII as King. The primary Sections were accordingly convoked, and the proposal was unanimously agreed to; the Dauphin was proclaimed; the English squadrons entered the harbour, and the crews of seven ships of the line, who proved refractory, were allowed to retire, while those of the remainder joined the inhabitants. Shortly afterwards the Spanish squadron arrived, bringing with them a considerable reinforcement of land troops, and the Allied Forces, eight thousand strong, took possession of all the forts in the city (3). The English Admiral Hood on this occasion, engaged in the most solemn manner, in two different proclamations, to take possession of Toulon, solely and exclusively in the name and for the behoof of Louis XVII, and to restore the fleet to the monarchical government of France on a general peace (4)

(1) Th. v. 142, 143. Toul. iv. 55.

(2) Toul. iv. 63, 66. Jon. iv. 208, 209. Th. v.

74. (3) Jon. iv. 209, 211. Toul. iv. 67, 68.

(4) In the first proclamation, Admiral Hood said, "If the people declare openly in favour of a monarchical government, and they resolve to put me in possession of the harbour, they shall receive all the succours which the squadron under my command can afford.—I declare that property and persons shall be held sacred; we wish only to establish peace.—When it is concluded, we shall restore the fleet to France, agreeably to the inventory which shall be made out." In the second he was equally explicit: "Considering that the Sections of Toulon, by the Commissioners whom they have

sent to me, have made a solemn declaration in favour of Louis XVII and a monarchical government, and that they will use their utmost efforts to break the chains which fetter their country, and re-establish the constitution, as it was accepted by their defunct sovereign in 1789: I repeat, by this present declaration, that I take possession of Toulon, and shall keep it solely as a deposit for Louis XVII, and that only till peace is re-established in France, which I trust is not far distant."—Proclamation, 28th August, 1793. Hard. ii. 357, 359. These were the true principles of the Anti-revolutionary war: very different from those proclaimed by the Austrians on the taking of Valcourciennes and Condé; nor was the subsequent destruction of the fleet, when Toulon was retaken by the Republicans, any

**Revolt and Siege of Lyon.** Carteaux immediately ordered a detachment of his forces to march against the insurgents, but the garrison, supported by a body of the National Guards of Toulon, marched to meet them, and the Republicans surprised, were obliged to fall back in confusion. This check proved the necessity of more energetic measures; a large portion of the army of Italy was recalled from the Alps, the National Guards of the neighbouring departments called out, new levies ordered, and the directions of Robespierre immediately acted upon, that Lyon must be burnt and razed to the ground, and then the siege of Toulon formed (1).

At the first intelligence of the revolt of Lyon, Kellermann assembled eight thousand men, and a small train of artillery, to observe the place. But this was totally insufficient even to maintain its ground before the armed population of the city, which soon amounted to thirty thousand men. A military chest was formed; a paper currency, guaranteed by the principal merchants, issued; cannon in great numbers cast at a foundery within the walls; and fortifications, under the direction of an able engineer, erected upon all the beautiful heights which encircle the city (2).

The troops of the Republicans, though daily increasing, were for long unable to make head against forces so considerable, supported by the ardour of a numerous and enthusiastic population. During the whole of August, accordingly, and the beginning of September, the siege made little progress, and the batteries of the besiegers were scarcely armed. The besieged, meanwhile, made proposals for an accommodation; but the Commissaries of the Convention returned for answer, "Rebels! first show yourselves worthy of pardon, by acknowledging your crime; lay down your arms; deliver up the keys of your city, and deserve the clemency of the Convention, by a sincere repentance." But the inhabitants, well aware of the consequence of such submission, returned for answer, "Conduct so atrocious as yours proves what we have to expect from your clemency; we shall firmly await your arrival; and you will never capture the city but by marching over ruins, and piles of dead (3)."

**Great efforts of the Republicans for its Reduction.** No sooner were the Convention informed of the entrance of the English into Toulon, than they redoubled in their ardour for the subjugation of Lyon. They indignantly rejected the advice of several

of their members, in whose bosom the feelings of humanity were not utterly extinct, for an accommodation with the inhabitants, and took the most energetic measures for the prosecution of the siege. A hundred pieces of cannon, drawn from the arsenals of Besançon and Grenoble, were immediately mounted on the batteries; veteran troops selected from the army on the

**Bombardment of the City, and Cruelty of the Besiegers.** frontiers of Piedmont, and four corps formed, which on different sides pressed the out-works of the city. In a succession of contests in the outer intrenchments, the Lyonesé evinced the most heroic valour; but although the success was frequently balanced, the besiegers upon the whole had the advantage, and the horrors of war, which they had so strenuously endeavoured to keep at a distance, at length fell on this devoted place. On the 24th September, a terrible bombardment and

departure from good faith in this transaction.—England was bound to restore the fleet to a monarchical government and Louis XVII, but not to hand it over to the Revolutionary government, the most bitter enemy of both.

(1) Toul. iv. 68.

(2) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 406. Toul. iv. 71.

(3) Jom. iv. 186, 187. Th. v. 310, 311.



cannonade, with red-hot shot was commenced, which was continued without intermission for a whole week. Night and day the flaming tempest fell on the quarter of Ste.-Clair, and speedily involved in conflagration the magnificent hotels of that opulent district, the splendid public buildings which had so long adorned the Place Bellecour, and the beautiful quays of the river. Soon after the arsenal blew up with a terrific explosion. At length the flames reached the great Hospital, one of the noblest monuments of the charity of the past age, now filled with the wounded and the dying, from every quarter of the town; a black flag was hoisted on its summit to avert the fury of the besiegers from that last asylum of humanity, but this only served to redouble their activity, and guide their shot, which were directed with such unerring aim, that after the flames had been two-and-forty times extinguished, it was burnt to the ground (1).

The ravages of the bombardment, however, increased the sufferings of the inhabitants, without diminishing their means of defence. But soon after, the incessant assaults of the Republicans made them master of the heights of Ste.-Croix, which commanded the city from a nearer position; and about the same time, the reinforcements which arrived from the southern departments, now thoroughly roused by the efforts of the Convention, enabled the besiegers to cut off all communication between the inhabitants and the country on which they had hitherto depended for provisions. Before the end of September, fifty thousand men were assembled before the walls; and notwithstanding the most rigid economy in the distribution of food, the pangs of want began to be severely felt. Shortly after (2), the garrison of Valenciennes arrived, and by their skill in the management of artillery, gave a fatal preponderance to the besieging force, while Couthon came up with twenty-five thousand rude mountaineers from the quarter of Auvergne.

Dreadful  
Sufferings  
of the Inha-  
bitants.

The hopes of the inhabitants had been chiefly rested on a diversion from the side of Savoy, where the Piedmontese troops were slowly assembling for offensive operations. But these expectations were cruelly disappointed. After a feeble eruption into the valley of St.-Jean de Maurienne, and some ephemeral success, the Sardinian army was driven back in disgrace over Mont-Cenis, having failed in taking advantage of an opportunity more favourable for the establishment of the Royalist party in the south of France than was ever again to recur. This disaster, coupled with the pressure of famine, now severely weakened the spirits of the besieged. Yet, though deserted by all the world, and assailed by a force which at length amounted to above sixty thousand men, the inhabitants nobly and resolutely maintained their defence. In vain the bombardment was continued with unexampled severity, and twenty-seven thousand bombs, five thousand shells, and eleven thousand red-hot shot, thrown into the city; regardless of the iron storm, one-half of the citizens manned the works, while the other half watched the flight of the burning projectiles, and carried water to the quarters where the conflagration broke forth (3).

But these efforts, however glorious, could not finally avert the stroke of fate. The Convention, irritated at the slow progress of the siege, deprived Kellermann of the command, and ordered him to the bar of the Convention to give an account of his conduct, although his talent and energy in repelling the Piedmontese invasion had been the salvation of the Republic. The com-

(1) Jom. iv. 187, 189. Toul. iv. 71, 75. Th. v. 306. Lac. xi. 105. Anu. Reg. xxxiii. 408.

(2) Lac. xi. 107. Toul. iv. 76. Th. v. 313.

(3) Lac. xi. 104. Bot. i. 247. Th. v. 311.

mand of the besieging army was given to General Doppet, who received orders instantly to reduce Lyon by fire and sword. To quicken his operations, the savage Couthon, as Commissioner of the Convention, was invested with a despotic authority over the generals, and he instantly resolved to carry Lyon by main force, and employ in the storm the whole sixty thousand men who were employed in the siege (1).

Their heroic  
Efforts.

On the 29th September, a general attack was made by the new commander on the intrenchments of the besieged, the object of which was to force the fortified posts at the point of Perrache, near the confluence of the Saone and the Rhone. After an obstinate resistance, the batteries of St.-Foix, which commanded that important point, were carried by the Republicans; and the bridge of La Mulatière, which connected it with the opposite bank, was forced. No farther intrenchments remained between the assailants and the city; the last moment of Lyon seemed at hand. But Precy hastened to the scene of danger, at the head of a chosen band of citizens; the assailants were encountered and driven back, with the loss of above two thousand men, from the plain of Perrache, but notwithstanding all their efforts, he could not prevent them from maintaining their ground on the bridge and heights of St.-Foix (2).

But all these heroic efforts could not arrest the progress of a more fatal enemy within the walls. Famine was consuming the strength of the besieged; for long the women had renounced the use of bread, in order to reserve it for the combatants, but they were soon reduced to half a pound a-day of this humble fare. The remainder of the inhabitants lived on a scanty supply of oats, which was daily served out with the most rigid economy from the public magazine. But even these resources were at length exhausted; in the beginning of October (3), provisions of every kind had failed; and the thirty Sections of Lyon, subdued by stern necessity, were compelled to nominate deputies to proceed to the hostile camp.

Precy forces  
his way  
through the  
Besiegers'  
Lines.

The brave Precy, however, even in this extremity, disdained to submit. With generous devotion, he resolved to force his way, at the head of a chosen band, through the enemy's lines, and seek in foreign climes that freedom of which France had become unworthy. On the night of the 9th October, the heroic column, consisting of two thousand men, the flower of Lyon, set forth, with their wives and children, and what little property they could save from the ruin of their fortunes. They began in two columns their perilous march, guided by the light of their burning habitations, amid the tears and blessings of those friends who remained behind. Scarcely had they set out, however, when a bomb fell into an ammunition waggon, by the explosion of which great numbers were killed. Notwithstanding this disaster, the head of the column broke the division opposed to it, and forced its way through the lines of the besiegers, but an overwhelming force soon assailed the centre and rear. As they proceeded, they found themselves enveloped on every side; all the heights were lined with cannon, and every house filled with soldiers; an indiscriminate massacre took place, in which men, women, and infants, alike perished; and of the whole who left Lyon, scarcely fifty forced their way with Precy into the Swiss territories (4).

(1) Jom. iv. 191. Toul. iv. 79. Th. v. 313, 314.

(2) Jom. iv. 192. Lac. xi. 108.

(3) Lac. xi. 110. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 410. Jom. iv. 192. Th. v. 314, 315.

(4) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 410. Lac. xi. 113. Th. v. 315. Jom. iv. 194.

Town Capitulates.

On the following day the Republicans took possession of Lyon. The troops observed strict discipline; they were lodged in barracks, or bivouacked on the Place Bellecour and the Terreaux: the inhabitants indulged a fleeting hope, that a feeling of humanity had at length touched the bosoms of their conquerors (1). They little knew the bitterness of Republican hatred; Lyon was not spared; it was only reserved for cold-blooded vengeance.

No sooner was the town subdued, than Couthon entered at the head of the authorities of the Convention, and instantly reinstated the Jacobin Municipality in full sovereignty, and commissioned them to seek out and denounce the guilty. He wrote to Paris, that the inhabitants consisted of three classes:—1. The guilty rich. 2. The selfish rich. 3. The ignorant workmen, incapable of any wickedness. “The first,” he said, “should be guillotined, and their houses destroyed; the fortunes of the second confiscated; and the third removed elsewhere, and their place supplied by a Republican colony.”

Sanguinary measures of the Convention to the Inhabitants.

“On the ruins of this infamous city,” said Barrère in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, when he announced that Lyon was subdued, “shall be raised a monument to the eternal glory of the Convention; and on it shall be engraved the inscription: *Lyon made war on freedom: Lyon is no more.*” The name of the unfortunate city was suppressed by a decree of the Convention; it was termed the “Commune Affranchie.” All the inhabitants were appointed to be disarmed, and the whole city destroyed, with the exception only of the poor’s house, the manufactories, the great workshops, the hospitals, and public monuments. A commission of five members was appointed to inflict vengeance on the inhabitants; at their head were Couthon and Collot-d’Herbois. The former presided over the destruction of the edifices, the latter, over the annihilation of the inhabitants. Attended by a crowd of satellites, Couthon traversed the finest quarters of the city with a silver hammer; he struck at the door of the devoted houses, exclaiming at the same time—“Rebellious house, I strike you in the name of the law!” Instantly the agents of destruction, of whom twenty thousand were in the pay of the Convention, surrounded the dwelling, and levelled it with the ground. The expense of these demolitions, which continued, without interruption, for six months, was greater than it cost to raise the princely Hotel of the Invalids: it amounted to the enormous sum of L.700,000 (2). The palaces thus destroyed, were the finest private buildings in France, three stories in height, and erected in the richest style of the buildings of Louis XIV.

Collot-d’Herbois’ Proceedings.

But this vengeance on inanimate stones, was but a prelude to more bloody executions. Collot-d’Herbois, the next proconsul, was animated with an envenomed feeling towards the inhabitants; ten years before he had been hissed off their stage, and the vicissitudes of the Revolution had now placed resistless power in the hands of an indifferent provincial comedian; an emblem of the too frequent tendency of civil convulsions, to elevate whatever is base, and sink whatever is noble among mankind. The discarded actor resolved at leisure to gratify a revenge of ten years’ duration; innumerable benefits since conferred on him by the people of Lyon, and no small share of their favour, had not been able to extinguish

(1) Jom. iv. 194.

(2) Lac. xi. 116, 117. Abbé Guillon, ii. 392. Th. v. 317, 318, 336.

this ancient grudge. Fouché, (of Nantes,) afterwards so well known as Minister of Police under Napoléon, the worthy associate of Collet-d'Herbois, published before his arrival a proclamation, in which he declared, "that the French people could acknowledge no other worship but that of universal morality; no other faith but that of its own sovereignty; that all religious emblems placed on the roads, on the houses, or on public places, should be destroyed (1); that the mortcloth used at funerals should bear, instead of a religious emblem, a figure of Sleep, and that over the gate of the cemetery should be written—*Death is an eternal sleep.*"

His atrocious cruelty.

Proceeding on these atheistical principles, the first step of Collet-d'Herbois and Fouché, was to institute a fête in honour of Challier, the Republican governor of Lyons, a man of the most execrable character, who had been put to death on the first insurrection, against the rule of the Convention. The churches were next closed, the priests abolished, the decade established, and every vestige of religion extinguished. The bust of Challier was then carried through the streets, followed by an immense crowd of assassins and prostitutes, exclaiming—"A bas les aristocrates! Vive la guillotine!" after them came an ass, bearing the gospel, the cross, the communion vases, and all the most sacred emblems of the Christian worship; the procession came to the Place des Terreaux, where an altar was prepared amidst the ruins of that once splendid square. Fouché then exclaimed—"The blood of the wicked can alone appease thy manes! We swear before thy sacred image, to avenge thy death; the blood of the aristocrats shall serve for its incense." At the same time, a fire was lighted on the altar, the crucifix and the gospel were committed to the flames; the consecrated bread trampled under the feet of the mob, and the ass compelled to drink out of the communion cup the consecrated wine. After this, the procession, singing indecent songs, traversed the streets, followed by an ambulatory guillotine (2).

Dreadful Measures of the Revolutionary Tribunal there.

The Revolutionary Tribunal, established under such auspices, was not slow in consummating the work of destruction. "Convinced, as we are," said Collet-d'Herbois, "that there is not an innocent soul in the whole city, but such as was loaded with chains by the enemies of the people, we are steeled against every sentiment of mercy; we are resolved that the blood of the patriots shall be revenged in a manner at once prompt and terrible. The decree of the Convention for the destruction of Lyons has been passed, but hardly any thing has been done for its execution. The work of demolition goes on too slowly; more rapid destruction is required by Republican impatience. The explosion of the mine, or the ravages of fire, can alone express its omnipotence; its will can admit of no control, like the mandates of tyrants; it should resemble the lightning of Heaven."—"We must annihilate at once the enemies of the Republic; that mode of revenging the outraged sovereignty of the people will be infinitely more appalling than the trifling and insufficient work of the guillotine. Often twenty wretches on the same day have undergone punishment, but my impatience is insatiable, till all the conspirators have disappeared; popular vengeance calls for the destruction of our whole enemies at one blow; we are preparing the thunder (3)."

In pursuance of these principles, orders were given to the Revolutionary

(1) *Moniteur*, p. 18. Oct. 1793. *Guillon*, ii. 333, 337. *Lac*. xi. 117.

(2) *Guillon*, ii. 346, 348. *Lac*. xi. 118.

(3) *Guillon*, ii. 402, 405. *Moniteur*, 24th Nov. 1793. *Th.* v. 356.

Tribunal to redouble their exertions. "We are dying of fatigue," said the judges and the executioner to Collot-d'Herbois. "Republicans," replied he, "the amount of your labours is nothing to mine; burn with the same ardour as I for your country, and you will soon recover your strength." But the ferocity of their persecutors was disappointed by the heroism which most of these victims displayed in their last moments. Seated on the fatal chariots, they embraced each other with transports of enthusiasm, exclaiming—

"Mourir pour la patrie  
Est le sort le plus doux,  
Le plus digne d'envie!"

Many women watched for the hour when their husbands were to pass to execution, precipitated themselves upon the chariot, locked them in their arms, and voluntarily suffered death by their side. Daughters surrendered their honour to save their parents' lives, but the monsters who violated them, adding treachery to crime, led them out to behold the execution of the objects for whom they had submitted to sacrifices worse than death itself (1).

Mitrailade of the Prisoners. Deeming the daily execution of fifteen or twenty such persons too tardy a display of Republican vengeance, Collot-d'Herbois prepared a new and simultaneous mode of punishment. Sixty captives, of both sexes, were led out together, tightly bound in a file, to the Place du Broteaux; they were arranged in two files, with a deep ditch on each side, which was to be their place of sepulture, while Gendarmes, with uplifted sabres, threatened with instant death whoever moved from the position in which they stood. At the extremity of the file, two cannon loaded with grape were so placed as to enfilade the whole. The wretched victims beheld with firmness the awful preparations, and continued singing the patriotic hymns of the Lyonesse, till the signal was given, and the guns were discharged. Few were so fortunate as to obtain death at the first fire, the greater part were merely mutilated, and fell uttering piercing cries, and beseeching the soldiers to put a period to their sufferings. Broken limbs, torn off by the shot, were scattered in every direction, while the blood flowed in torrents into the ditches on either side of the line (2). A second and a third discharge were insufficient to complete the work of destruction, till at length the Gendarmerie, unable to witness such protracted sufferings, rushed in and despatched the survivors with their sabres. The bodies were collected and thrown into the Rhone.

Vast numbers who there perished. On the following day, this bloody scene was renewed on a still greater scale. Two hundred and nine captives, drawn from the prisons of Roanne, were brought before the Revolutionary Judges, at the Hôtel-de-Ville, and, after merely interrogating them as to their name and professions, the lieutenant of the Gendarmerie read a sentence, condemning them all to be executed together. In vain several exclaimed that they had been mistaken for others, that they were not the persons condemned. With such precipitance was the affair conducted, that two commissaries of the prison were led out along with their captives; their cries, their reclamations were alike disregarded. In passing the bridge Morand, the error was discovered, upon the prisoners being counted; it was intimated to Collot-d'Herbois, that there were two too many. "What signifies it," said he, "that there are two too many; if they die to-day, they cannot die to-morrow." The

(1) Guillon, ii. 416. Lac. xi. 118, 119.

(2) Guillon, ii. 417. Lac. xi. 121.

whole were brought to the place of execution, a meadow near the granary of Part-Dieu, where they were attached to one cord, made fast to trees at stated intervals, with their hands tied behind their backs, and numerous pickets of soldiers disposed so as by one discharge to destroy them all. At a signal given, the fusillade commenced; but few were killed; the greater part had only a jaw or a limb broken, and uttering the most piercing cries, broke loose in their agony from the rope, and were cut down by the Gendarmerie in endeavouring to escape (1). The great numbers who survived the discharge, rendered the work of destruction a most laborious operation, and several were still breathing on the following day, when their bodies were mingled with quick-lime, and cast into a common grave. Collot-d'Herbois and Fouché were witnesses of this butchery from a distance, by means of telescopes which they directed to the spot.

All the other fusillades, of which there were several, were conducted in the same manner. One of them was executed under the windows of a hotel on the Quay, where Fouché, with thirty Jacobins and twenty courtesans were engaged at dinner; they rose from table to enjoy the spectacle. The bodies of the slain were floated in such numbers down the Rhône, that the waters were poisoned, and the danger of contagion at length obliged Collot-d'Herbois to commit them to the earth. During the course of five months, upwards of six thousand persons suffered death by the hands of the executioners, and more than double that number were driven into exile. Among those who perished on the scaffold, were all the noblest and most virtuous characters of Lyon, all who were distinguished either for generosity, talent, or accomplishment. The engineer, Morand, who had recently constructed the celebrated bridge over the Rhone, which bore his name, was among the first to suffer, and he was succeeded by a generous merchant, whose only crime consisted in having declared that he would give 500,000 francs to rebuild the Hôtel-Dieu, the noblest monument of charity in Lyon (2).

These dreadful atrocities excited no feeling of indignation in the Convention. With disgraceful animosity, they were envious of any city which promised to interfere with the despotism of the Parisian populace, and were secretly rejoiced at an excuse for destroying the wealth, spirit, and intelligence which had sprung up with the commercial prosperity of Lyon. "The arts and commerce," said Hébert, "are the greatest enemies of freedom. Paris should be the centre of political authority, no community should be suffered to exist which can pretend to rival the capital." Barrère announced the executions to the Convention in the following words:—"The corpses of the rebellious Lyonese floated down the Rhone, will teach the perfidious citizens of Toulon the fate which awaits them (3)."

The troops engaged in the siege of Lyon were immediately moved towards that unhappy city; twelve battalions of the army of Italy were destined to the same service, and soon forty thousand men were assembled under its walls. It presented, nevertheless, great difficulties to be overcome (4).

Siege of  
Toulon.

On the land side Toulon is backed by a ridge of lofty hills, on which, for above a century past, fortifications had been erected. Though formidable to the attacking force, however, these fortified posts were not less dangerous to the besieged, if once they fell into the hands of the enemy, for the greater part of the city and harbour could be reached by their guns.

(1) Guillon, ii. 427. Lac. xi. 121.

(2) Lac. xi. 121, 122. Guillon, ii. 317, 427.

(3) Lac. xi. 121. Guillon, ii. 307, 308.

(4) Toul. iv. 81.

The mountain of Faron and the Hauteur de Grâce are the principal points of this rocky range; on their possession depends the maintenance of the place (1).

Shortly after their disembarkation, the English made themselves masters of the defile of Ollioulles, a rocky pass of great strength, well known to travellers for its savage character, which forms the sole communication between the promontory of Toulon and the mainland of France. An English detachment of six hundred men had driven the Republican posts from this important point; but the defence having been unwisely intrusted to a Spanish

force, Cartaux assailed it in the beginning of September, with above five thousand men, and after a slight resistance, regained the pass. Its occupation being deemed too great a division of the garrison of the town, already much weakened by the defence of the numerous fortified posts in the vicinity of the harbour, no attempt was made to regain the lost ground, and the Republican videttes were pushed up to the external works of Toulon. As a recompense for this important service, Cartaux was deprived of his command by the Convention, and Dugommier invested with the direction of the besieging force (2).

Every exertion was made by the Allied troops, and the inhabitants of Toulon, during the respite afforded by the siege of Lyon, to strengthen the defences of the town, but the regular force was too small, and composed of too heterogeneous materials, to inspire any well-grounded confidence in their means of resistance. The English troops did not exceed five thousand men, and little reliance could be placed on the motley crowd of eight thousand Spanish, Piedmontese, and Neapolitan soldiers, who composed the remainder of the garrison. The hopes of the inhabitants were principally rested on powerful reinforcements from England and Austria; but their expectations from both these powers were miserably disappointed. They made the utmost efforts, however, to strengthen the defence of the place, and in especial endeavoured to render impregnable the Fort Aiguillette, placed at the extremity of the promontory which shuts in the lesser harbour, and which, from its similarity to the position of the great fortress of the same name, they called the Little Gibraltar (3).

In the beginning of September, Lord Mulgrave arrived and assumed the command of the whole garrison, and the most active operations were immediately commenced for strengthening the outworks on the mountain range behind the city (4). The heights of Malbousquet, of Cape Brun, and of Aiguillette, were soon covered with works traced out by the French engineers.

No sooner had General Dugommier taken the command, and the whole besieging army assembled, than it was resolved to commence an attack on the hill forts which covered the harbour; and for this purpose, while a false attack was directed against Cape Brun, the principal effort was to be made for the possession of the mountain of Faron, and the Fort Malbousquet. With this view the breaching batteries were placed under the direction of a young officer of artillery, then chief of battalion, destined to outstrip all his predecessors in European history, Napoléon Bonaparte. Under his able superintendence, the works of the fort soon began to be seriously damaged; and to interrupt the operation, a sally was resolved upon from the garrison (5).

On the 30th November the sally was made by three thousand men from the

(1) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415. Toul. iv. 81.

(4) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415.

(2) Toul. iv. 81. Jom. iv. 215. Th. vi. 51.

(5) Jom. iv. 219, 220.

(3) Th. vi. 52. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415.

Progress of  
the Siege.  
Nov. 30.

**TOWN**, to destroy the works on the heights of Arrennes, from which this annoyance was expected; while another column, of nearly the same strength, proceeding in the opposite direction, was destined to force the batteries at the gorge of Ollioulles, and destroy the great park placed there. Both attacks were at first crowned with complete success; the batteries were carried, and the park on the point of being taken, when Dugommier, after haranguing the troops, led them back to the charge, and succeeded in repulsing the assailants. On the side of Arrennes, the sally was equally fortunate, all the enemy's works were carried, and their guns spiked; but the impetuosity of the detachment having led them too far in pursuit of the enemy, they were, in their turn, attacked by fresh troops, headed by Napoléon, and driven back to the city with considerable loss. In this affair General O'Hara, who had recently arrived from England, was wounded, and Dugommier was twice struck with spent balls, though without experiencing any serious injury (1).

The whole force of the besiegers was now directed against the English redoubt, erected in the centre of the works on the neck of land called Aiguillette, and regarded as the key of the defence on that quarter. After battering the forts for a considerable time, the fire of the besiegers became quite incessant for the whole of the 16th of December; and at two o'clock on the morning of the 17th, the Republicans advanced to the assault. They were received with a tremendous fire of grape and musketry from the works, and soon the ditch was filled with the dead and the dying. The column was driven back, and Dugommier, who headed it, gave all over for lost; but fresh troops continually advancing, with great intrepidity, at length overpowered the Spanish soldiers, to whom a part of the line was intrusted, and surrounded the British detachment, nearly three hundred of whom fell while gallantly defending their part of the intrenchments. The possession of this fort by the enemy rendered the farther maintenance of the exterior defences impracticable; and in the night, the whole Allied troops were withdrawn from the promontory to the city of Toulon (2). Napoléon had strongly recommended this measure, as the possession of this fort, which commanded the inner harbour, would render the situation of the fleet extremely perilous, and in all probability lead to the evacuation of the city.

Decisive  
measures of  
Napoléon.  
Storming of  
the exterior  
forts.

While this important success was gained on the side of Fort Aiguillette, the Republicans were not less fortunate on the other extremity of the line. A little before daybreak, and shortly after the firing had ceased on the promontory, a general attack was made by the enemy on the whole extensive range of posts which crowned the mountain of Faron. On the eastern side the Republicans were repulsed; but on the north, where the mountain was nearly eighteen hundred feet in height, steep, rocky, and apparently inaccessible, they succeeded in making good their ascent through paths deemed impracticable. Hardly were the Allies beginning to congratulate themselves on the defeat of what they deemed the main attack, when they beheld the heights above them crowded with glittering battalions, and the tricolor flag displayed from the loftiest summit of the mountain (3).

(1) Ann. Reg. 1793, 414. Jom. iv. 220. Toul. iv. 85. Th. vi. 55, 56. Nap. i. 13, 15.

(2) Jom. iv. 223. Toul. iv. 87. Ann. Reg. 1793, 415. Th. vi. 56, 57. Nap. i. 14, 22, 23.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 415. Jom. iv. 223. Toul. iv. 88.



These conquests, which were projected by the genius of Napoléon, were decisive of the fate of the place. The garrison, it is true, still consisted of above ten thousand men, and the works of the town itself were as yet uninjured; but the harbour was untenable, as the shot from the heights of Faron and Fort l'Aiguillette ranged over its whole extent. Sir Samuel Hood, alone, warmly insisted upon the propriety of an immediate effort to regain the out-works which had been lost; his advice was overruled by all the other officers, and it was resolved to evacuate the place (1).

Evacuation of the place. Measures were immediately taken to carry this determination into effect. The exterior forts, which still remained in the hands of the Allies, were all abandoned, and information conveyed to the principal inhabitants, that the means of retreat would be afforded them on board the British squadron, while the fleet was moved to the outer roads beyond the reach of the enemy's fire. But much confusion necessarily ensued with a garrison composed of so many different nations, and the Neapolitans, in particular, fled from their posts, and got on board their ships with so much precipitation, that they incurred the derision of the whole garrison (2).

Despair of the Inhabitants. But very different were the feelings with which the unfortunate inhabitants regarded this hasty evacuation of their city. To them it was the harbinger of confiscation, exile, and death, Republican conquest, and the reign of the guillotine. With anxious eyes they watched the embarkation of the British sick and wounded on the morning of the 18th, and when the fatal truth could no longer be concealed that they were about to be abandoned, despair and anguish wrung every heart. The streets were soon in the most frightful state of confusion; in many, the Jacobins were already firing on the flying groups of women and children who were hurrying to the quay; and the sides of the harbour were soon filled with a piteous crowd, entreating, in the name of every thing that was sacred, to be saved from their implacable enemies. No time was lost in taking the unfortunate fugitives on board the vessels appointed for that purpose; an operation of no small labour and difficulty, for their numbers exceeded fourteen thousand (3).

Burning of the Arsenal and Fleet. It was resolved in the council, that such part of the French fleet as could be got ready for sea, should be sent out under the Royalist Admiral Trogoffe, and that the remainder, with all the stores, should be destroyed. This was a service of great danger, for the Republicans were fast pressing on the retreating forces of the besieged, and their shot already began to plunge into the harbour. Sir Sidney Smith volunteered to conduct the perilous enterprise, and at midnight proceeded to the arsenal to commence the work of destruction. He found the galley-slaves, to the number of six hundred, the greater part of whom were unfettered, disposed to dispute his entrance into the dock-yard, but by disposing a British sloop so that its guns enfiladed the quay, he was able to overawe them, and at the same time restrain the Jacobins, who, in great numbers, and with loud shouts, were assembling round its outer palisades. At eight, a fireship was towed into the harbour, and at ten the torch was applied, and the flames arose in every quarter. Notwithstanding the calmness of the night, the fire spread with rapidity, and soon reached the fleet, where, in a short time, fifteen ships of the line, and eight frigates, were consumed or burnt to the water's edge. The volumes

(1) Nap. i. 14. Ann. Reg. 1793, 415.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. p. 416, 418. James's Na-

(2) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. p. 416, 417. Jom. iv. 224. val Hist. i. 115. Th. vi. 59.

Th. vi. 57. Toul. iv. 88. James, i. 110, 115.

of smoke which filled the sky, the flames which burst, as it were, out of the sea, and ascended to the heavens, the red light which illuminated even the most distant mountains, formed, says Napoléon, a sublime and unique spectacle (1). About midnight, the *Iris* frigate, with several thousand barrels of powder, blew up with a terrific explosion, and shortly after the *Montreal*, fireship, experienced the same fate. The burning embers falling in every direction, and the awful violence of the shocks, quelled for a moment the shouts of the Republican soldiers, who now crowded to the harbour's edge, and beheld, with indignant fury, the resistless progress of the conflagration (2).

Horrors of  
the Evacua-  
tion

No words can do justice to the horrors of the scene which ensued, when the last columns of the Allied troops commenced their embarkation. Cries, screams, and lamentations, were heard in every quarter; the frantic clamour, heard even across the harbour, announced to the soldiers in the Republican camp that the last hope of the Royalists was giving way. The sad remnant of those who had favoured the Royal cause, and who had neglected to go off in the first embarkation, came flying to the beach, and invoked, with tears and prayers, the aid of their British friends. Mothers, clasping their babes to their bosoms, helpless children and decrepid old men, might be seen stretching their hands towards the harbour, shuddering at every sound behind them, and even rushing into the waves to escape the less merciful death which awaited them from their countrymen. Such as could seize upon boats rushed into them with frantic vehemence, pushed from the beach without oars, and directed their unsteady and dangerous course towards their former protectors. Sir Sidney Smith, with a degree of humanity worthy of his high character, instantly suspended his retreat till not a single individual who claimed his assistance remained on the strand, though the total number borne away amounted to fourteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven (3).

The lukewarmness or timidity of the Spanish officers, to whom the destruction of the vessels in the basin before the town had been intrusted, preserved them from destruction, and saved a remnant, consisting of seven ships of the line and eleven frigates, to the Republic. These, with five ships of the line, sent round to Rochefort at the commencement of the siege, were all that remained of thirty-one ships of the line, and twenty-five frigates, which were lying in Toulon at the time it fell into the hands of the Allies. Three ships of the line, and three frigates, were brought away untouched, and taken into the English service; the total number taken, or destroyed, was eighteen ships of the line, nine frigates, and eleven corvettes (4). The French soldiers beheld, with indescribable anguish, the destruction of their fleet; all thinking men then foresaw that the war now lighted up between the rival states, could not be extinguished but by the destruction of one of them.

Dreadful  
Cruelty of  
the Repub-  
licans.

The storm which now burst on the heads of the unfortunate Toulonese, was truly dreadful. The infuriated soldiers rushed into the town, and, in their rage, massacred two hundred Jacobins, who had come out to welcome their approach. For twenty-four hours, the

(1) Nap. i. 25.

(2) Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 418. Jom. iv. 226. James, i. 117. Th. vi. 58, 59. Nap. i. 25, 26.

(3) Joubert's Memoirs, p. 75. Jom. ii. 226. Ann. Reg. 1703, 418. Foulville, 84, 87, 112.

(4) Jom. iv. 225, 226. James, i. 117. Th. vi. 60. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 420.

wretched inhabitants were a prey to the brutality of the soldiers, and of the galley slaves, who were let loose upon the city; and a stop was only put to these horrors by the citizens-redeeming themselves for the enormous sum of 4,000,000 francs, or L.160,000. To the honour of Dugommier, it must be added, that he did his utmost, both to check the violence of his soldiers, and mitigate the severity of the Convention towards the captives. Several thousand citizens, of every age and sex, perished in a few weeks, by the sword or the guillotine; two hundred were daily beheaded for a considerable time, and twelve thousand labourers were hired from the surrounding departments to demolish the buildings of the city (1).

But nothing could soften the hearts of that inexorable body. On the motion of Barrère, it was decreed that the name of Toulon should be changed to that of Port de la Montagne, that the houses should be rased to the foundations, and nothing left but the naval and military establishments. Barras, Fréron, and Robespierre the younger, were chosen to execute the vengeance of the Convention on the fallen city. Military Commissions were immediately formed, the prisons filled, a Revolutionary Tribunal established, and the guillotine put in permanent activity. The inhuman mitrallades of Lyon were imitated with fearful effect; before many weeks had expired, eight hundred persons had been thus cut off; a prodigious proportion out of a population not now exceeding ten thousand souls. One of the victims was an old merchant of the name of Hugues, eighty-four years of age, deaf, and almost blind. His only crime was the possession of a fortune of L. 800,000. He offered all his wealth but 500,000 livres to save his life; the judge, deeming that offer inadequate, sent him to the scaffold, and confiscated the whole. "When I beheld this old man executed," said Napoléon, "I felt as if the end of the world was at hand (2)." Among those struck down in one of the fusillades, was an old man, severely, but not mortally wounded. The executioners conceiving him dead, retired from the scene of carnage; the persons who succeeded them to strip the dead, passed him by through accident, in the darkness of the night, and he had strength enough left to raise himself from the ground, and move from the spot. His foot struck against a body, which gave a groan, and, stooping down, he discovered that it was his own son! After the first transports of joy were over, they crept along the ground, and favoured by the darkness of the night, and the inebriety of the guards, they had the good fortune to escape, and lived to recount a tale which would have passed for fiction, if experience had not proved, in innumerable instances, that the horrors and vicissitudes of a Revolution exceed any thing which the imagination of romance could have conceived (3).

Thus terminated this memorable campaign, the most remarkable in the annals of France, perhaps in the history of the world. From a state of unexampled peril, from the attack of forces which would have crushed Louis XIV, in the plenitude of his power, from civil dissensions which threatened to dismember the state, the Republic emerged triumphant. A revolt apparently destined to sever the opulent cities of the South from its dominions; a civil war, which consumed the vitals of the Western provinces; an invasion, which had broken through the iron barrier of the Northern, and shaken the strength of the Eastern frontier, were all defeated. The discom-

General Reflections on the campaign.

(1) Jom. iv. 226. Ann. Reg. xxxiii. 421. James, i. 116, 117. Revolution; iii. 336.

(2) Las Cases, i. 166.

(3) Ann. Reg. xxxiii 421. Lac. xi. 189.

fited English had retired from Toulon, the Prussians, in confusion, had recrossed the Rhine, the tide of conquest was rolled back in the North, and the valour of the Vendéens irretrievably arrested.

For these immense advantages, the Convention were indebted to the energy of their measures, the ability of their councils, and the enthusiasm of their subjects. In the convulsion of society, not only wickedness, but talent had risen to the head of affairs; if history has nothing to show comparable to the crimes which were committed, it has few similar instances of undaunted resolution to commemorate. Impartial justice requires that this praise should be bestowed upon the Committee of Public Safety; if the cruelty of their internal administration exceeded the worst despotism of the emperors, the dignity of their external conduct rivalled the noblest instances of Roman heroism.

In talent, it was evident that the Republicans had now acquired a decided preponderance over their opponents. This was the natural consequence of the concentration of all the ability of France in the military service, and the opening which was afforded to merit in every rank, to aspire to the highest situations. Drawn from the fertile mines of the middling classes, the talent which now emerged in every department, from the general to the sentinel, formed the basis of a more intelligent army than had ever been formed in modern Europe, while the inexhausted supplies of men which the conscription afforded, raised it to a numerical amount, beyond any thing hitherto known in the world.

After having authorized a levy of 300,000 men in spring, the Convention, in the beginning of August, ordered a levy of 1,200,000 more. These immense armaments, which, in ordinary times, could never have been attempted by a regular government, were successively brought into the field during the fervour of a Revolution, through the exaltation of spirit which it had produced, and the universal misery which it had engendered. The destruction of commerce, and the closing of all pacific employment, augmented those formidable bands, which issued as from a fiery volcano, to devastate the surrounding states; and from the annihilation of all the known sources of credit, the government derived unparalleled financial resources.

As this was a new element, then for the first time introduced into political contests, so all the established governments of Europe were mistaken in the means of resisting it. They were not aware of the magnitude of the power which was thus roused into action, and hoped to crush it by the same moderate efforts which had been found successful in former wars. While France, accordingly, strained every nerve to recruit its armies, they contented themselves with maintaining their contingents at their former numerical amount; and were astonished when the armies calculated to match 300,000 soldiers, failed in subduing a million. Hence the rapid series of successes, which, in every quarter, before the end of the year, signalized the Republican arms; and the explanation of the fact, that the Allied forces, which, in the commencement, were everywhere superior, before the close of the campaign, were on all sides inferior to their opponents.

But most of all did England experience, in this campaign, the bitter consequence of the imprudent reduction of military force which had followed the close of the American war. With an army at first not exceeding thirty thousand men, what could be achieved against France in the energy of a Revolution? Yet what fair opportunities, never again to recur, were then afforded to crush the hydra in its cradle! If thirty thousand British troops had been

added to the Duke of York's army at the siege of Dunkirk, that important fortress would speedily have fallen, and the advance of the Allied Army palsied all the efforts of the Convention; if the same force had aided the insurgents of la Vendée, the white flag would have been advanced to the Tuileries; if it had been sent to Toulon, the Constitutional throne would have been at once established in all the south of France. What countless sums, what gigantic efforts were required to regain the ground then lost! The affairs of Napoléon in spring 1814, were not so hopeless as those of the Republic would have been, if such an addition could have been made at that critical moment to the British invading force.

This ruinous system of reducing the forces of the country upon the conclusion of hostilities, is the cause of almost all the discomfitures which tarnish the reputation, and of more than half the debt which now curbs the energies, of Britain. The cause, incident to a free constitution, has been well explained by Dean Tucker. "The patriot and furious anti-courtier always begins with schemes of frugality, and is a zealous supporter of measures of economy. He loudly exclaims against even a small Parliamentary army, both on account of its danger and expense. By persevering in these laudable endeavours, he prevents such a number of forces by land and sea from being kept up as are necessary for the common safety of the kingdom. The consequence is, when a war breaks out, new levies are half-formed, and half-disciplined, squadrons at sea are half-manned, and the officers mere novices in their business. Ignorance, unskilfulness, and confusion, are unavoidable for a time, the necessary result of which is some defeat received, some stain or dishonour cast upon the arms of Britain. Thus the nation is involved in expenses ten times as great, and made to raise forces twenty times as numerous, as were complained of before; till peace is made, and schemes of ruinous economy are again called for by a new set of patriots. Thus the patriotic farce goes round, ending in real tragedy to the nation and mankind (1)." It seems hopeless to expect, that this popular cry for costly economy will ever cease in pacific periods, because, even with the recent proof of its ruinous effect, at the commencement of the Revolutionary war, we have seen it so fiercely raised for the reduction of the noble force which brought it to a glorious termination. It seems the melancholy fate of each successive generation to be instructed by its own and never by its predecessors' errors; and perhaps it is a law of nature, that such causes should, at stated periods, prostrate the strength of free states, and prevent that progressive growth of their power, which might otherwise sink the emulation of independent kingdoms in the slumber of universal dominion.

(1) Tucker's Essays, I. 72.

## CHAPTER XIV.

REIGN OF TERROR—FROM THE DEATH OF DANTON TO THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE.

## ARGUMENT.

Origin of the Atrocities of the Reign of Terror—It springs from sacrificing Justice to supposed Expedience—Principles of Robespierre's Government after the Fall of Danton—Political Fanaticism of the period—Character of St.-Just and Couthon—Their prodigious Energy—Great accumulation of prisoners at Paris, and throughout France—Pretended Conspiracy in the Prisons—Picture of the Prisons during this period—Dreadful system of Espionage in Paris, and the other Towns of France—Convention meanwhile is occupied with the Civic Virtues—Unsuccessful attempt to Assassinate Robespierre—Fête in honour of the Supreme Being—Additional Powers conferred on the Revolutionary Tribunal—Debate on it in the Assembly—But it is nevertheless carried—Rapid increase of the Proscriptions—Means by which the support of the people was secured—Cruelties in the Provinces—Lebon at Arras—Carrier at Nantes—General apathy of the Class of Proprietors—Execution of Malesherbes and his Family—Of Madame Elizabeth—Of Custine's Son, Marshal Luckner, Biron, Lamar-tillière, and Dietrich—Agony of the Prisoners—Death of the Princess of Monaco, Lavoisier, Roucher, and others—Horror at length excited by the frequency and descent in Society of the executions—Advantage first taken of the Superstition of Robespierre—Suspensions of Robespierre awakened—Henriot and St.-Just recommend vigorous Measures—Insurrection agreed on at the Jacobins—Measures of the Convention to resist it—The Contest begins in the Assembly—Robespierre's Speech—Cambon's Reply—Extraordinary Meeting of the Jacobins—Mutual preparations during the Night—Meeting of the Convention on the 9th Thermidor—Vehement Eloquence of Tallien—Consternation of Robespierre—Robespierre, Couthon, St.-Just, and Henriot ordered to be Arrested—Robespierre is imprisoned, but liberated by the People—Firmness of Tallien and his Party—The cannoneers desert—Henriot in the Place Carrousel—Dreadful Agitation at Paris—The Sections join the Convention—Preparations at the Hôtel-de-Ville—The Cannoneers desert Robespierre, who is arrested—Dreadful Scene at his Seizure—Executed with St.-Just, Henriot, Couthon, and their Party—Reflections on the Reign of Terror, with the prodigious Number of its Victims.

"OMNIA mala exempla," says Sallust, "*bonis initiis orta sunt*."—"E l'ordine di questi accidenti," says Machiavel, "è che mentre che gli uomini cercano di non temere, cominciano a fare temere altrui, et quella injuria che gli scacciano di loro, la pongono sopra un altro, come se fusse necessario, offendere o esser offeso (1)."

"You are quite wrong," said Napoléon to Talma, in the representation of Nero; "you should conceal the tyrant; no man admits his wickedness either to others or himself. You and I speak history, but we speak it like other men (2)." The words which Sallust puts into the mouth of Cæsar, and Napoléon addressed to the actor of Nero, point to the same, and one of the most important principles of human nature. When vice appears in its native deformity, it is universally shunned, its features are horrible alike to others and itself (3). It is by borrowing the language, and rousing the passions of virtue,

(1) "All bad actions," says Sallust, "spring from good beginning."—"And the progress of these events," says Machiavel, "is this, that in their efforts to avoid fear, men inspire it in others, and that injury which they seek to ward off themselves, they throw upon their neighbours, so that it seems

inevitable either to give or receive offence." [Discorse, 46.]

(2) Napoléon, ii. p. 274

(3) Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,  
That to be hated needs but to be seen;  
But seen too oft, familiar with his face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

that it insinuates itself into the minds not only of the spectators, but the actors; the worst deeds are committed by men who delude themselves and others by the noblest expressions. Tyranny speaks with the voice of prudence, and points to the dangers of popular insurrection; ambition strikes on the chords of patriotism and loyalty, and leads men to ruin others, in the belief that they are saving themselves; democratic fury appeals to the spirit of freedom, and massacres thousands in the name of insurgent humanity. In all these cases men would shrink with horror from themselves, if their conduct appeared in its true colours; they become steeped in crime, while yet professing the intentions of virtue, and before they are well aware that they have transgressed its bounds.

Origin of  
the Atroc-  
ities of the  
Reign of  
Terror.

All these atrocities proceed from one source; criminality in them all begins when one line is passed. This source is the principle of expedience, this line is the line of justice. "To do evil that good may come of it," is not the least prolific cause of wickedness. It is absolutely necessary, say the politicians of one age, to check the growing spirit of heresy; discord in this world, damnation in the next, follow in its steps; religion, the fountain of peace, is in danger of being polluted by its poison; the transient suffering of a few individuals will ensure the eternal salvation of millions. Such is the language of religious intolerance, such the principles which lighted the fires of Smithfield. How cruel soever it may appear, say the statesmen of another, to sacrifice life for property, it is indispensable in an age of commercial industry; the temptations to fraud are so great, the facilities of commission so extensive, that but for the terror of death, property would be insecure, and industry with all its blessings nipt in the bud. Such is the language of commercial jealousy, of that sanguinary code which the humanity and extended wisdom of England is only beginning to relax. You would not hesitate, say the leaders of another period, to sacrifice a hundred thousand men in a single campaign, to preserve a province, or conquer a frontier town; but what are the wars of princes, to the eternal contest between freedom and tyranny; and what the destruction of its present enemies, to the liberty of unborn millions of the human race? Such is the language of revolutionary cruelty; these the maxims which, beginning with the enthusiasm of philanthropists, ended in the rule of Robespierre. Their unexampled atrocities arose from the influence yielded to a single principle; the greatest crimes which the world has ever known, were but an extension of the supposed expedience, which hangs for forgery, and burns for heresy.

It springs  
from ac-  
cruing Jus-  
tice: to sup-  
posed Expe-  
dience.

The error in all these cases is the same, and consists in supposing that what is unjust ever can be ultimately expedient, or that the Author of Nature would have implanted feelings in the human heart which the interests of society require to be continually violated. "A little knowledge," says Lord Bacon, "makes men irreligious, but extended wisdom brings them back to devotion;" with equal truth it may be said, "That a little experience makes governments and people iniquitous, but extended information brings them back to the principles of justice." The real interests of society, it is at last perceived, can only be secured by those measures which command universal concurrence, and none can finally do this but such as are founded on the original feelings of our nature. It is by attending only to the *first effect* of unjust measures, that men are ever deceived on this subject; when their ultimate consequences come to be

appreciated, the expedience is found all to lie on the other side. When the feelings of the great body of mankind are outraged by the measures of government, a reaction invariably follows, and the temporary advantages of injustice are more than counterbalanced by the permanent dissatisfaction which it occasions. The surest guide, it is at length discovered, is to be found in the inward monitor which nature has implanted in every human heart; and statesmen are taught, by experience, that true wisdom consists in following what their conscience tells them to be just, in preference to what their limited experience, or mistaken views, may apprehend to be expedient.

Principles  
of Robes-  
pierre's Go-  
vernment,  
after the  
fall of Dan-  
ton.

The truth of these principles was strongly exemplified in the latter stages of the French Revolution. During the four months which elapsed between the death of Danton and the fall of Robespierre, DEATH became the sole engine of government; systematic and daily executions took place in the capital; extermination, conducted by despotic agents, prevailed in the provinces, and yet nothing but the language of philanthropy was breathed in the Convention, nothing but the noblest sentiments were uttered by the Decemvirs. Each defeat of their rivals only rendered the ruling faction more sanguinary; the successive proscriptions of the Royalists, of the Girondists, of the Constitutionalists, and of the Anarchists, were immediately followed by a more violent effusion of human blood. The destinies of France, as of every other country which undergoes the crisis of a Revolution, had fallen into the hands of men, who, born of the public convulsions, were sustained by them alone; they massacred in the name of their principles, they massacred in the name of the public welfare; but terror of their rivals was the real spring of their actions. The noblest and most sacred motives which can influence the human breast, virtue, humanity, the public good, the freedom of the world, were incessantly invoked, to justify their executions, to prolong a power founded on the agony of the people (1).

The death of Danton was followed by immediate and unqualified submission from every part of France. Legendre himself, his old friend, said at the Jacobin Club,—"I am bound to declare before the people, that I am fully convinced, by the documents I have inspected, of Danton's guilt. Before his accusation I was his intimate friend; I would have answered for his patriotism with my head; but his conduct and that of his accomplices at their trial leave no doubt of their intentions." The same sentiments were re-echoed from every part of France. From all the departments arrived a crowd of addresses, congratulating the Committee of Public Safety and the Convention on their energy. Every one hastened to make his submission to the government, and to admit the justice of its proceedings. But while approbation was in every mouth, submission in every countenance, terror in every heart, hatred at the oppressors was secretly spreading, and the downfall of democratic tyranny preparing amidst the acclamations of its triumph (2).

Political  
Fanaticism  
of the Pe-  
riod.

The political fanaticism of that extraordinary period exceeded the religious fervour of the age of Cromwell. Posterity will find it as difficult to credit the one as the other. "Plus le corps social transpire," said Collot-d'Herbois, "plus il devient sain."—"Il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas," said Barrère. "Le Vaisseau de la Révolution ne peut arriver au port que sur une mer rougie de flots de sang," said St.-Just. "Une nation ne se régénère que sur des monceaux de cadavres," rejoined Robes-

(1) Mig. ii. 316. Th. vi. 223.

(2) Th. vi. 223, 225.



pierre. Such were the principles daily carried into practice for months together in every town in France (1). Alone and unresisted, the Committee of Public Safety struck repeated and resistless blows from one end of the kingdom to the other. Fertile in crime, abounding in wretchedness, that eventful reign was not wanting in the most heroic examples of virtue. "Non tamen adeo Virtutum sterile sæculum, ut non et bona exempla prodiderit. Comitatae liberos profugos matres, secutæ maritos in exilia conjuges, propinqui ardentes, constantes generi (2), contumax etiam adversus tormenta servorum fides, supremæ clarorum virorum necessitates, ipsa necessitas fortiter tolerata, et laudatis antiquorum mortibus pares exitus (3)."

The professed object of the Decemvirs was to establish a Republic in France, after the model of the ancients, to change the manners, the habits, the public spirit of the country. Sovereignty in the people, magistrates without pride, citizens without vice, simplicity of manners, fraternity of relations, austerity of character; such were the basis on which their institutions were to rest. There was one objection to them, that they were utterly impracticable, from the character of the great body of mankind. To accomplish this object it was indispensable to destroy the whole superior classes of society, to cut off all those who were pre-eminent among their neighbours, either for fortune, rank, talent, or acquirement. This was the end accordingly proposed in the indiscriminate massacres which they put in execution. And what would have been its consequence if completely carried into effect? To sink the whole human race to the level of the lowest classes, and destroy every thing which dignifies or adorns human nature. Such was the chimera which they followed through these oceans of blood. Politicians have no right, after such proceedings, to reproach religious enthusiasm with the reign of the saints, or the approach of the millennium (4).

In pursuance of these views, St.-Just made a laboured report on the general police of the Commonwealth, in which he recapitulated all the fabulous stories of conspiracies against the Republic; explaining them as efforts of every species of vice against the austere rule of the people; and concluding with holding out the necessity of the government striking without intermission, till it had cut off all those whose corruption opposed itself to the establishment of virtue. "The foundation of all great institutions," said he, "is terror. Where would now have been an indulgent Republic? We have opposed the sword to the sword, and its power is in consequence established. It has emerged from the storm, and its origin is like that of the earth out of the confusion of Chaos, and of man who weeps in the hour of nativity." As a consequence of these principles, he proposed a general measure of proscription against all the nobles, as the irreconcilable opponents of the Revolution,—"You will never," said he, "satisfy the enemies of the people, till you have re-established tyranny in all its horrors. They can never be at peace with you; you do not speak the same language; you will never understand each other. Banish them by an inexorable law; the universe may receive April 10, 1794. them; and the public safety is our justification." He then proposed

(1) Mig. ii. 317. Riouffe, 181—186. Rev. Mem. xlii. 186.

(2) Tac. Hist. i. 2.

(3) Yet the age was not so sterile in virtue as to be destitute of great examples. Mothers attended their flying children, wives followed their exiled husbands, relations were undaunted, sons-in-law,

unshaken, firm even against the utmost tortures, the fidelity of slaves, the illustrious subjected to the last necessities; necessity itself bravely endured, and deaths equal to the most renowned of antiquity, of daily occurrence.

(4) Mig. ii. 317.

a decree which banished all the ex-nobles, all strangers from Paris, the fortified towns, and seaports of France; and declared *hors la loi* whoever did not yield obedience in ten hours to the order. It was received with applause by the Convention, and passed, as all the decrees of government at that time, by acclamation (1).

The Committee of Public Safety, now confident in its own strength, and strong in the universal submission of France, decreed the disbanding of the Revolutionary army, raised to overawe the capital. At the same time the situations of the different ministers were abolished, and twelve committees appointed to carry on the details of government. These commissions, entirely appointed by the Committee of Public Safety, and dependent on their will, were, in fact, nothing but the offices in which they exercised their mighty and despotic powers (2).

Shortly after, steps were taken to extinguish all the popular societies which did not immediately depend on the great parent club of the Jacobins. It was resolved at that society that they would no longer receive any deputation from bodies formed since the 10th August, or keep up any correspondence with them; and that a committee should be appointed, to consider whether it should be maintained with those which were formed before that event. This measure, directed, in an especial manner, against the club of the Cordeliers, the centre of the influence of Danton, soon produced the desired effect. Intimidated by the destruction of the leaders of that great society, the whole other clubs in France, to avoid the coming storm, dissolved themselves; and in less than ten days after the promulgation of this resolution there remained no secondary club in France, but those which were affiliated with the Jacobins at Paris, which thenceforward became the sole organ of government in regulating public opinion. It was next proposed to close the sittings of the Cordeliers; but this was unnecessary; that club, once so terrible, rapidly declined, and soon died a natural death. The Jacobins, swayed with absolute power by the Committee of Public Safety, with their affiliated societies, alone remained of all the innumerable clubs which had sprung up in France. Thus, on all sides, the anarchy of Revolution was destroying itself; and out of its ruins the stern and relentless despotism of a few political fanatics (3), was wringing out of the heart's blood of France the last remnants of democratic fervour.

Robespierre was the leader of this sect of fanatics; but he was associated in the Committee with zealots more unpitiable or less disinterested than himself. These were St.-Just and Couthon. The former exhibited the true features of gloomy fanaticism; a regular visage, dark and lank hair, a penetrating and severe look, a melancholy expression of countenance, revived the image of those desperate Scottish enthusiasts of whom modern genius has drawn so graphic a picture (4). Simple and unostentatious in his habits, austere in private, and indefatigable in public, he was at twenty-five, the most resolute, because the most sincere of the Decemvirs. A warm admirer of the Republic, he was ever at his post in the committees, and never wanting in resolution during his missions to the armies; enthusiastic in his passion for the multitude, he disdained, like Hébert, to imitate its vices, or pander to its desires. Steeled against every sentiment of pity, he

(1) Th. vi. 228, 230. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 36, 39.

(2) Th. vi. 230, 231.

(3) Th. vi. 334—336.

(4) Burley, in *Old Mortality*, by Sir Walter Scott.

demanding the execution of victims in the same manner as the supply of the armies. Proscriptions like victories were essential to the furtherance of his principles. He early attached himself to Robespierre, from the similarity of their ideas, and the reputation of incorruptibility which he enjoyed; their alliance created a portentous combination of envious domineering passion, with inflexible and systematic severity (4).

And Couthon.

Couthon was the creature of Robespierre. A mild expression of countenance, a figure half-paralysed, concealed a soul animated with the most unpitiable fanaticism. These three men formed a triumvirate, which soon acquired the management of the Committee; and awakened an animosity on the part of the other members, which ultimately led to their ruin. In the meanwhile, however, they wielded the whole powers of government; if the Assembly was to be intimidated, St.-Just was employed; if surprised, Couthon was intrusted; if any opposition was manifested, Robespierre was sent for, and his terrible voice soon stifled the expression of discontent (2).

Their prodigious Energy.

To accomplish their regeneration of the social body, the triumvirate proceeded with gigantic energy, and displayed the most consummate ability. For two months after the fall of Danton, they laboured incessantly to confirm their power. Their commissioners spread terror through the departments, and communicated the requisite impulse to the affiliated Jacobin Clubs, which alone now remained in existence. The National Guard was universally devoted to their will, and proved the ready instrument of the most sanguinary measures. The armies, victorious on every side, warmly supported their energetic administration, and made the frontiers resound with the praise of the government. Strong in the support of such powerful bodies, the fanatical leaders of the Revolution boldly and universally began the work of extermination. The mandates of death issued from the capital, and a thousand guillotines instantly were raised in every town and village of France. Amidst the roar of cannon, the rolling of drums, and the sound of the tocsin, the suspected were everywhere arrested, while the young and active marched off to the defence of the country; fifteen hundred Bastilles, spread through the departments, soon groaned with the multitude of captives; unable to contain their numbers, the monasteries, the palaces, the châteaux, were generally employed as temporary places of confinement (3). The abodes of festivity, the palaces of kings, the altars of religion, were loaded with victims; fast as the guillotine did its work, it could not reap the harvest of death which everywhere presented itself; and the crowded state of the prisons soon produced contagious fevers, which swept off thousands of their unhappy inmates.

To support these violent measures, the utmost care was taken to preserve in full vigour the democratical spirit in the Club of the Jacobins, the centre of the Revolutionary action throughout France. By successive *purifications*, as they were called, all those who retained any sentiments of humanity, any tendency towards moderation, were expelled, and none left but men of iron, steeled against every approach to mercy. The Club in this way at length became the complete quintessence of cruelty, and the focus of the most fearful Revolutionary energy. Its influence daily augmented; as he approached

(1) Mig. ii. 318, 319.

(2) Mig. ii. 319, 320.

(3) Pr. Hist. Lac. ii. 149. Mig. ii. 320. Chateaub., Essai Hist. Ouv. i. 61—63.

the close of his career, Robespierre, suspicious of the Convention and the Mountain, rested almost entirely on that chosen band of adherents, whose emissaries ruled with absolute sway the Municipality and the Departments (1).

Seven thousand prisoners were soon accumulated in the different places of confinement in Paris; the number throughout France exceeded 200,000. The condition of such a multitude of captives was necessarily miserable in the extreme; the prisons of the Conciergerie, of the Force, and the Mairie, were more horrible than any in Europe. All the comforts which, during the first months of the Reign of Terror, were allowed to the captives of fortune were withdrawn. Such luxuries, it was said, were an insupportable indulgence to the rich aristocrats, while, without the prison-walls, the poor were starving for want. In consequence they established refectories, where the whole prisoners, of whatever rank or sex, were allowed only the coarsest and most unwholesome fare. None were permitted to purchase better provisions for themselves; and to prevent the possibility of their doing so a rigorous search was made for money of every description, which was all taken from the captives. Some were even denied the sad consolation of bearing their misfortunes together; and to the terrors of solitary confinement were added those of death, which daily became more urgent and inevitable. Not content with the real terrors which they presented, the ingenuity of the jailers was exerted to produce imaginary anxiety; the long nights were frequently interrupted by visits from the executioners, solely intended to excite alarm; the few hours of sleep allowed to the victims were broken by the rattling of chains, and unbarring of doors, to induce the belief that their fellow-prisoners were about to be led to the scaffold; and the warrants for death against eighty persons were made the means of keeping six hundred in agony (2).

Great accumulation of Captives at Paris, and throughout France.

Pretended Conspiracy in the Prisons.

Dissatisfied with the progress of the executions, the Revolutionary Tribunal fell upon an extraordinary expedient to accelerate them.

By the prospect of amnesty to themselves, they prevailed on some of the basest of the captives to announce a project for escape in the prisons. "We must have a conspiracy," said Fouquier-Tinville, "in the prisons; its chiefs are already named; choose their companions, we must have sixty or a hundred." The victims whom the traitors selected were those whose rank or fortune was most likely to render them acceptable to the Committee; their names were announced aloud in the prisons, and they were led out next morning to execution (3).

Despair of life, recklessness of the future, produced their usual effects on the unhappy crowd of captives. Some sunk into sullen indifference; others indulged in immoderate gaiety, and sought to amuse life even to the foot of the scaffold. The day before his execution, the poet Ducorneau composed a beautiful ode, which was sung in chorus by the whole prisoners, and repeated, with a slight variation, after his execution (4). At other times the scene changed; in the midst of their ravings the prisoners first destined for

(1) Toul. iv. 360. Chateaub. OEuv. i. 61. Mig. ii. 320.

(2) Th. vi. 18, 149, 150, 319. Riouffe, 83. Lac. ii. 149. Toul. iv. 358, 360.

(3) Lac. ii. 150, 151. Th. vi. 363, 364.

(4) In the transport of the moment another exclaimed in extempore verse—

"Amis! combien il d'attraits  
L'instant où s'unissent nos âmes!  
Le cœur juste est toujours en paix,  
O doux plaisir que n'eût jamais  
L'ambitieux avec ses trames!  
Venez, bourreaux! nous sommes prêts."

the scaffold, were transported by the Phedon of Plato, and the death of Socrates; infidelity in its last moments betook itself with delight to the sublime belief of the immortality of the soul. The affections, continually called forth, flowed with uncommon warmth; their mutual fate excited among the prisoners the strongest feelings of commiseration; and nothing astonished the few who escaped from confinement so much as the want of sympathy for the sufferings of mankind which generally prevailed in the world (1).

Picture of  
the Prisons  
during this  
period.

From the farthest extremities of France crowds of prisoners daily arrived at the gates of the Conciergerie, which successively sent forth its bands of victims to the scaffold. Grey hairs, and youthful forms; countenances blooming with health, and faces worn with suffering; beauty and talent, rank and virtue, were indiscriminately rolled together to the fatal doors. With truth might have been written over their portals what Dante placed over the entrance of the infernal regions :—

“Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch’entrate.”

Sixty persons often arrived in a day, and as many were on the following morning sent out to execution. Night and day the cars incessantly discharged victims into the prison; weeping mothers, and trembling orphans, were thrust in without mercy with the brave and the powerful; the young, the beautiful, the unfortunate, seemed in a peculiar manner the prey of the assassins. Nor were the means of evacuating the prisons augmented in a less fearful progression. Fifteen only were at first placed on the chariot, but their number was soon augmented to thirty, and gradually rose to eighty persons, who daily were sent forth to the place of execution; when the fall of Robespierre put a stop to the murders, arrangements had been made for increasing it to one hundred and fifty. An immense aqueduct, to remove the gore, had been dug as far as the Place St.-Antoine; and four men were daily employed in emptying the blood of the victims into that reservoir (2).

It was at three in the afternoon when the melancholy procession set out from the Conciergerie; the troop slowly passed through the vaulted passages of the prison, amidst crowds of captives, who gazed with insatiable avidity on the aspect of those about to undergo a fate which might so soon become their own. The higher orders in general behaved with firmness and serenity; silently they marched to death, with their eyes fixed on the heavens, lest their looks should betray their indignation. Numbers of the lower class piteously bewailed their fate, and called heaven and earth to witness their innocence. The pity of the spectators was in a peculiar manner excited by the bands of females led out together to execution; fourteen young women of Verdun, of the most attractive forms, were cut off together. “The day after their execution,” says Riouffe, “the court of the prison looked like a garden bereaved of its flowers by a tempest.” On another occasion, twenty women of Poitou, chiefly the wives of peasants, were placed together on the chariot; some died on the way, and the wretches guillotined their lifeless remains; one kept her infant in her bosom till she reached the foot of the scaffold; the executioners tore the innocent from her breast, as she suckled it for the last time, and the screams of maternal agony were only stifled with her life. In removing the prisoners from the jail of the Maison St.-Lazare, one of the women declared

(1) Riouffe, 108, 111. Th. vi. 320.

(2) Riouffe, 83, 84. Th. vi. 319.

herself with child, and on the point of delivery; the hard-hearted jailers compelled her to move on; she did so, uttering piercing shrieks, and at length fell on the ground, and was delivered of an infant in presence of her persecutors (1).

Such accumulated horrors annihilated all the charities and intercourse of life. Before daybreak the shops of the provision-merchants were besieged by crowds of women and children, clamouring for the food which the law of the *maximum* in general prevented them from obtaining. The farmers trembled to bring their fruits to the market, the shopkeepers to expose them to sale. The richest quarters of the town were deserted; no equipages or crowds of passengers were to be seen on the streets; the sinister words, *Propriété nationale*, imprinted in large characters on the walls, everywhere showed how far the work of confiscation had proceeded. Passengers hesitated to address their most intimate friends on meeting; the extent of calamity had rendered men suspicious even of those they loved the most. Every one assumed the coarsest dress, and the most squalid appearance; an elegant exterior would have been the certain forerunner of destruction (2). At one hour only were any symptoms of animation to be seen; it was when the victims were conveyed to execution; the humane fled with horror from the sight; the infuriated rushed in crowds to satiate their eyes with the sight of human agony.

Night came, but with it no diminution of the anxiety of the people. Every family early assembled its members; with trembling looks they gazed round the room, fearful that the very walls might harbour traitors. The sound of a foot, the stroke of a hammer, a voice in the street, froze all hearts with horror. If a knock was heard at the door, every one in agonized suspense expected his fate. Unable to endure such protracted misery, numbers committed suicide. "Had the reign of Robespierre," says Fréron, "continued longer, multitudes would have thrown themselves under the guillotine; the first of social affections, the love of life, was already extinguished in almost every heart (3)."

In the midst of these unparalleled atrocities, the Convention were occupied with the establishment of the civic virtues. Robespierre pronounced a discourse on the qualities suited to a Republic. He dedicated a certain number of the decennial fêtes to the Supreme Being, to Truth, to Justice, to Modesty, to Friendship, to Frugality, to Good Faith, to Glory, and to Immortality! Barrère prepared a report on the suppression of mendicity, and the means of relieving the indigent poor. Robespierre had now reached the zenith of his popularity with his faction; he was denominated the Great Man of the Republic; his virtue, his genius, his eloquence, were in every mouth (4).

The speech which Robespierre made on this occasion was one of the most remarkable of his whole career. "The idea," said he, "of a Supreme Being, and of the immortality of the soul, is a continual call to justice; it is therefore a social and republican principle. Who has authorized you to declare that the Deity does not exist? Oh! you who support in such impassioned strains so arid a doctrine, what advantage do you expect to derive from the principle that a blind fatality regulates the affairs of men, and that the soul

(1) Riouffe, 85, 87. Tableau, Hist. de la Maison de St.-Lazare. Rev. Mem. xxiii. 226.

(2) Lac. ii. 151, 152, Th. vi. 318, 319.

(3) Lac. ii. 12. Toul. iv. 235, 236. Riouffe, 83. Fréron, 49.

(4) Mig. ii. 320, 321.

is nothing but a breath of air impelled towards the tomb? Will the idea of nonentity inspire man with more pure and elevated sentiments than that of immortality? will it awaken more respect for others or himself, more courage to resist tyranny, greater contempt for pleasure or death? You who regret a virtuous friend, can you endure the thought that his noblest part has not escaped dissolution? You who weep over the remains of a child or a wife, are you consoled by the thought that a handful of dust is all that remains of the beloved object? You, the unfortunate, who expire under the strokes of an assassin, is not your last voice raised to appeal to the justice of the Most High? Innocence on the scaffold, supported by such thoughts, makes the tyrant turn pale on his triumphal car. Could such an ascendant be felt, if the tomb levelled alike the oppressor and his victim?

“Observe how on all former occasions tyrants have sought to stifle the idea of the immortality of the soul. With what art did Cæsar, when pleading in the Roman Senate in favour of the accomplices of Catiline, endeavour to throw doubts on the belief of its immortality; while Cicero invokes against the traitor the sword of the laws and the vengeance of Heaven! Socrates, on the verge of death, discoursed with his friends on the ennobling theme; Leonidas, at Thermopylæ, on the eve of executing the most heroic design ever conceived by man, invited his companions to a banquet in another world. The principles of the Stoics gave birth to Brutus and Cato even in the ages which witnessed the expiry of Roman virtue; they alone saved the honour of human nature, almost obliterated by the vices and the corruption of the empire.

“The Encyclopedists, who introduced the frightful doctrine of Atheism, were ever in politics below the dignity of freedom; in morality they went as far beyond the dictates of reason. Their disciples declaimed against despotism, and received the pensions of despots; they composed alternately tirades against kings, and madrigals for their mistresses; they were fierce with their pens, and rampant in antechambers. That sect propagated with infinite care the principles of Materialism. We owe to them that selfish philosophy which reduced egotism to a system; regarded human society as a game of chance, where success was the sole distinction between what was just and unjust; probity as an affair of taste or good breeding; the world as the patrimony of the most dexterous of scoundrels.

“The priests have figured to themselves a god in their own image; they have made him jealous, capricious, cruel, covetous, implacable; they have enthroned him in the heavens as a palace, and called him to the earth only to demand, for their behoof, tithes, riches, pleasures, honours, and power. The true temple of the Supreme Being is the universe; his worship virtue; his fêtes the joy of a great people, assembled under his eyes to tighten the bonds of social affection, and present to him the homage of pure and grateful hearts.” In the midst of the acclamations produced by these eloquent words, the Assembly decreed unanimously that they recognised the existence of the Supreme Being, and of the immortality of the soul, and that the worship most worthy of him was the practice of the social virtues (1).

This speech is not only remarkable as containing the religious views of so memorable an actor in the bloodiest periods of the Revolution, but as involving a moral lesson of perhaps greater moment than any that occurred

(1) Th. vi. 246—251.

during its whole progress. For the first time in the annals of mankind, a great nation had thrown off all religious principles, and openly defied the power of Heaven itself; and from amidst the wreck which was occasioned by the unchaining of human passions, arose a solemn recognition of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the Soul! It seemed as if Providence had permitted human wickedness to run its utmost length, in order, amidst the frightful scene, to demonstrate the necessity of religious belief, and vindicate the majesty of its moral government. In vain an infidel generation sought to establish the frigid doctrine of Materialism; their principles received their full development: the anarchy they are fitted to induce was experienced, and that recognition was wrung from a suffering, which had been denied by a prosperous age.

Nor is this speech less striking as evincing the fanaticism of that extraordinary period, and the manner in which, during revolutionary convulsions, the most atrocious actions are made to flow from the most pure and benevolent expressions. If you consider the actions of Robespierre, he appears the most sanguinary tyrant that ever desolated the earth; if you reflect on his words, they seem dictated only by the noblest and most elevated feelings. There is nothing impossible in such a combination: the history of the world exhibits too many examples of its occurrence; it is the nature of fanaticism, whether religious or political, to produce it. The Inquisition of Spain, the *auto-da-fés* of Castile, arose from the same principles as the daily executions of the French tyrant. It is because revolutions lead to such terrible results, by so flowery and seductive a path, that they are chiefly dangerous; and because the ruin thus induced is irrecoverable, that the seducers of nations are doomed by inexorable justice to the same infamy as the betrayers of individuals.

Unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Robespierre and Collot-d'Herbois. Two unsuccessful attempts at assassination increased, as is always the case, the power of the tyrant. The first of these was made by an obscure, but intrepid man, of the name of L'Amiral, who tried to assassinate Collot-d'Herbois; the second by a young woman, named Cécile Renaud. L'Amiral, when brought before his judges, openly avowed that he had intended to assassinate Robespierre before Collot-d'Herbois. When called on to divulge who prompted him to the commission of such a crime, he replied firmly, "That it was not a crime; that he wished only to render a service to his country; that he had conceived the project without any external suggestion; and that his only regret was that he had not succeeded." The latter called at his house, and entreated, in the most earnest manner, to see Robespierre: the urgency of her manner excited the suspicion of his attendants, and she was arrested. Two knives, found in her bundle, sufficiently evinced the purpose of her visit. Being asked what was her motive for wishing to see him, she replied, "I wished to see how a tyrant was made. I admit I am a Royalist, because I prefer one king to fifty thousand." She behaved on the scaffold with the firmness of Charlotte Corday; her whole relations, to the number of sixty, were involved in her fate, among whom were a number of young men, bravely combating on the frontier in defence of their country (1).

Meanwhile, a magnificent fête was prepared by the Convention in honour of the Supreme Being. Two days before it took place, Robespierre was ap-

(1) Mig. ii. 322. Lac. ii. 162, 163. Th. vi. 321, 323, 326.



Fête in honour of the Supreme Being, June 7, 1794.

pointed President, and intrusted with the duty of Supreme Pontiff on the occasion. He marched fifteen feet in advance of his colleagues, in a brilliant costume, bearing flowers and fruits in his hands. His address which followed to the people was both powerful and eloquent; the generous sentiments which it contained revived hopes long dormant in their breasts, but all were dashed by the concluding words. "People! to-day let us give ourselves up to the transports of pure happiness; to-morrow we will with increased energy combat vice and the tyrants." The ceremony on this occasion, which was arranged under the direction of the painter David, was very magnificent. An amphitheatre was placed in the gardens of the Tuileries, opposite to which were statues representing Atheism, Discord, and Selfishness, which were destined to be burnt by the hand of Robespierre. Beautiful music opened the ceremony, and the President, after an eloquent speech, seized a torch, and set fire to the figures, which were soon consumed; and when the smoke cleared away, an effigy of Wisdom was seen in their place, but it was remarked that it was blackened by the smoke of those that had been consumed. Thence they proceeded to the Champ-de-Mars, where patriotic songs were sung, oaths taken by the young, and homage offered to the Supreme Being (1).

The Committee of Public Safety being now avowedly in possession of supreme power, their adulators in the Convention and Jacobin Club offered them the ensigns of sovereignty. But they had the good sense to perceive that the people were not yet prepared for this change, and that the sight of guards or a throne might shake a power which 500,000 captives in chains could not expose to obloquy. "The Members of the Committee," said Couthon, "have no desire to be assimilated to despots; they have no need of guards for their defence; their own virtue, the love of the people, Providence, watch over their days; they have no occasion for any other protection. When necessary, they will know how to die at their post in defence of freedom (2)."

June 9,

1794.

Additional Powers conferred on the Revolutionary Tribunal.

The bloody intentions announced by Robespierre were too effectually carried into effect on the day following the fête of the Supreme Being, by the decree of the 22d Prairial, passed on the motion of Couthon. By this sanguinary law, every form, privilege, or usage, calculated to protect the accused, were swept away. "Every postponement of justice," says Couthon, "is a crime; every formality indulgent to the accused is a crime; the delay in punishing the enemies of the country should not be greater than the time requisite for identifying them." The right of insisting for an individual investigation, and of being defended by counsel, were withdrawn. In addition to those struck at by former laws, there were included in this new decree "all those who have seconded the projects of the enemies of France, either by favouring the retreat of, or shielding from punishment, the aristocracy or conspirators; or by persecuting and calumniating the patriots, or by corrupting the mandatories of the people; or by abusing the principles of the Revolution, of the laws, or of the government, by false or perfidious applications, or by deceiving the representatives of the people, or by spreading discouragement or false intelligence, or by misleading the public by false instruction or depraved example." The proof requisite to convict of these multifarious offences was declared to be, "Every piece of evidence, material, moral, verbal, or written, which is sufficient to convince

(1) Th. vi. 340, 342. Mig. ii. 322.

(2) Th. vi. 329.

a reasonable understanding." The Revolutionary Tribunal was divided into four separate courts, each possessing the same powers as the original, and a public accuser, and sufficient number of judges and jurymen, awarded to each, to enable them to proceed with rapidity in the work of extermination (1).

Debate on  
It in the As-  
sembly: Accustomed as the Convention was to blind obedience, they were startled with this project. "If this law passes, nothing remains," said Ruamps, "but to blow out our brains." Alarmed at the agitation which prevailed, Robespierre mounted the Tribune. "For long," said he, "the Assembly has argued and decided on the same day, because for long it has been liberated from the empire of faction. I demand, that instead of pausing on the proposal for adjournment, we sit till eight at night if necessary, to discuss the project of the law which has now been submitted to it." The Assembly felt its weakness, and in thirty minutes the decree was *unanimously* adopted (2).

On the following day, some Members, chiefly adherents of the old party of Danton, endeavoured to overthrow this sanguinary decree of the Assembly. Bourdon de l'Oise proposed that the safety of the Members of the Assembly should be provided for by a special enactment. He was ably supported by Merlin; and the Legislature seemed inclined to adopt the proposal. Couthon attacked the Mountain, from which the opposition seemed chiefly to emanate. But it is  
nevertheless  
carried Bourdon replied: "Let the Members of the Committee know," said he, "that if they are patriots, so are we. I esteem Couthon, I esteem the Committee; but, more than all, I esteem the unconquerable Mountain, which has saved the public freedom."—"The Convention, the Committee," said Robespierre, "the Mountain, are the same thing. Every representative who loves liberty, every representative who is resolved to die for his country, is part of the Mountain. Woe to those who would assassinate the people, by permitting some miserable intriguers to divide the patriots, in order to elevate themselves on the public ruin!" The imperious tone of Robespierre, the menaces of his colleagues, again overawed the Assembly, and the law passed without the protecting clause proposed by Bourdon. Every individual in the Convention was now at the mercy of the Dictators; and the daily spectacle of fifty persons executed, was enough to subdue more undaunted spirits (3).

Armed by this accession of power, the proscriptions proceeded, during the next two months, with redoubled violence. The power of Robespierre was prodigious, and wielded with an energy to which there is nothing comparable in the history of modern Europe. The ruling principle of his government was to destroy the whole aristocracy, both of rank and talent (4). It was on this foundation that his authority rested; the mass of the people ardently supported a government which was rapidly destroying every thing which was above them in station, or superior in ability. Every man felt his own consequence increased, and his own prospects improved, by the destruction of his more fortunate rivals. Inexorable towards individuals or leaders, Robespierre was careful of protecting the masses of the community; and the lower orders, who always have a secret pleasure in the depression of their superiors, beheld with satisfaction the thunder which rolled innocuous over their heads, striking every one who could by possibility stand in their way. The whole physical force of the Republic, which must always be drawn from

(1) Lac. ii. 160, 161. Th. vi. 346, 347. Mig. ii. 323.

(2) Mig. ii. 324. Th. vi. 340.

(3) Mig. ii. 325. Lac. ii. 170. Th. vi. 350-353. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 367.

(4) Brissot's Mémoires, ii. 22.

Means by  
which the  
Support of  
the People  
was secured.

the labouring classes, was thus devoted to his will. The armed force of Paris, under the orders of Henriot, and formed of the lowest of the rabble, was at his disposal; the Club of the Jacobins, purified and composed according to his orders, were ready to support all his projects; the Revolutionary Tribunal blindly obeyed his commands; the new Municipality, with Henriot at its head, was devoted to his will. By the activity of the Jacobin Clubs, and the universal prevalence of the same interests, the same state of things prevailed in every department of France. Universally the lowest class considered Robespierre as identified with the Revolution, and as centring in his person all the projects of aggrandizement which were afloat in their minds. None remained to contest his authority but the remnants of the Constitutional and Girondist parties, who still lingered in the Assembly (1).

Cruelties  
in the Pro-  
vince. Le-  
bon at  
Arras.

The insolence of power, and the atrocious cruelty of revolutionary revenge, was, if possible, more strongly evinced in the provinces than in the metropolis. The disturbances on the northern frontier led to the special mission of a monster named Lebon to these districts, armed with the power of the Revolutionary Government. His appearance in these departments could be compared to nothing but the apparition of those hideous furies so much the subject of dread in the times of paganism. In the city of Arras, above two thousand persons, brought there from the neighbouring departments, perished by the guillotine. Mingling treachery and seduction with sanguinary oppression, he turned the despotic powers with which he was invested into the means of individual gratification. After having disgraced the wife of a nobleman who yielded to his embraces in order to save her husband's life, he put the man to death before the eyes of his devoted consort; a species of treachery so common, says Prudhomme, that the examples of it were innumerable. Children whom he had corrupted were employed by him as spies upon their parents (2); and so infectious did the cruel example become, that the favourite amusement of this little band was putting to death birds and small animals, with little guillotines made for their use (3).

Carrier at  
Nantes.

The career of Carrier at Nantes, where the popular vengeance was to be inflicted on the Royalists of the western provinces, was still more relentless. Five hundred children of both sexes, the eldest of whom was not fourteen years old, were led out to the same spot to be shot. Never was so deplorable a spectacle witnessed. The littleness of their stature caused most of the bullets, at the first discharge, to fly over their heads; they broke their bonds, rushed into the ranks of the executioners, clung round their knees, and with supplicating hands and agonized looks, sought for mercy. Nothing could soften these assassins; they put them to death even when lying at their feet. A large party of women, most of whom were with child, and many with babes at their breast, were put on board the boats in the Loire. The innocent caresses, the unconscious smiles of these little innocents, filled their mothers' breasts with inexpressible anguish; they fondly pressed

(1) Mig. ii. 326, 327.

(2) Th. vi. 376, 377 Prudhomme, *Victimes de la Révolution*, ii. 274. Chateaub. *Étude. Hist. i. 102.* Préface.

(3) It is a curious fact, highly illustrative of the progress of Revolutions, that this monster in the human form was at first humane and inoffensive in

his government, and it was not till he had received reiterated orders from Robespierre, with a hint of a dungeon in case of refusal, that his atrocities commenced. Let no man, if he is not conscious of the utmost firmness of mind, be sure that he would not, in similar circumstances, have done the same. —DUCREUX D'ARANTES, vii. 213, 214.

them to their bosoms, weeping over them for the last time. One of them was delivered of an infant on the quay; hardly were the agonies of childbirth over, when she was pushed, with the newborn innocent, into the galley. After being stripped naked, their hands were tied behind their backs; their shrieks and lamentations were answered by strokes of the sabre, and while struggling betwixt terror and shame to conceal their nudity from the gaze of the executioners, the signal was given, the planks cut, and the shrieking victims for ever buried in the waves (1).

Human cruelty, it would be supposed, could hardly go beyond these executions, but it was exceeded by Lebon at Bordeaux. A woman was accused of having wept at the execution of her husband; she was condemned, amidst the applauses of the multitude, to sit several hours under the suspended blade, which shed upon her, drop by drop, the blood of the deceased, whose corpse was above her on the scaffold, before she was released by death from her agony (2).

General apathy of the class of Proprietors. One of the most extraordinary features of these terrible times, was the apathy which the better classes both in Paris and the provinces evinced, and the universal disposition to bury anxiety in the delirium of present enjoyment. The people who had escaped death went to the operas daily, with equal unconcern whether thirty or an hundred heads had fallen during the day. The class of proprietors at Bordeaux, Marseille, and all the principal towns, timid and vacillating, could not be prevailed on to quit their hearths, while the Jacobins, ardent, reckless, and indefatigable, inured to crime, plunged a merciless sword into the bosom of the country. The soldiers everywhere supported their tyranny; the prospect of ransacking cellars, ravishing women, and plundering coffers, made them universally faithful to the government. "When in a country which we all conceived to be on the point of regeneration," says Louvet, "the men of property were everywhere so timid, and the wicked so audacious, it became evident that all assemblages of men, once dignified with the name of the people by such fools as myself, are, in truth, nothing more than an imbecile herd, too happy to be permitted to crouch under the yoke of a despotic master (3).

Execution of Malesherbes; Malesherbes, the generous and intrepid defender of Louis XVI, was too immaculate a character to escape destruction. For some time he had lived in the country, in the closest retirement; a young man accused of emigration, concealed in his house, furnished a pretext for the apprehension of the venerable old man and all his family. When he arrived at the prison, all the captives rose up and crowded round him; they brought him a seat: "I thank you," said he, "for the attention you pay to my age, but I perceive one amongst you feebler than myself, give it to him." He was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal along with his whole family; even the judges of that sanguinary court turned aside their heads to avert the heart-rending spectacle. They were all condemned together.

And his family. His daughter, Madame de Rozambo, when preparing to mount the fatal chariot, perceived Mademoiselle Sombreuil, whose heroic devotion had saved her father on the second of September, but who had again followed him to prison. Throwing herself into her arms, she exclaimed:—"You have

(1) Prudhomme, ii. 27. Chateaub. Étud. Hist. i. 102.

(2) Louvet, 123.

(3) Louvet, 124, 125. Mercier's Tab. de Paris.

had the good fortune to save your father, and I have the glory of dying with mine (1)."

*Of Madame  
Elizabeth.*

Madame Elizabeth, sister to Louis XVI, was the next victim. When she was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, the judges and the jury manifested an unusual degree of impatience for her condemnation. Like the King and Queen she manifested the utmost composure and serenity when under examination; her answers, clear, distinct, and perfectly true, left no room for suspicion or misconstruction. Being accused of having succoured some men who had been wounded in the Champs-Élysées, on the occasion of the revolt, she replied, "Humanity alone led me to dress their wounds; I needed no enquiry into the origin of their sufferings to feel the obligation to relieve them. I never thought this a merit, but I cannot see how it can be considered as a crime."—"Admit, at least," said the President. "that you have nourished in the young Capet the hope of regaining the throne of his father."—"I devoted myself," said she, "to the care of that infant, who was the more dear to me, as he had lost those to whom he owed his being." Being accused of being an accomplice of the tyrant:—"If my brother had been a tyrant," she replied, "neither you nor I would have been where we now are." She was condemned along with many others of illustrious rank and dignified virtue. On the chariot she declared that one of her companions had disclosed to her that she was pregnant, and thus was the means of saving her life. She died with the serenity of an angel, praying for those who had taken her life. The beauty of her form, and the placidity of her expression, awakened sentiments of commiseration even among the most savage of the Revolutionary spectators (2).

*Of Custine's  
son, Luck-  
ner, Biron,  
and Dietrich.* Custine, son of the celebrated general of the same name, was executed for having let fall some expressions of attachment to his father; Alexander Beauharnais for having failed to raise the siege of Mayence. The letters of both to their wives, the night before their execution, exhibited the most touching strains of eloquence. Marshal Luckner, whom the Jacobins had so long represented as the destined saviour of France; General Biron, whose amiable qualities, notwithstanding the profligacy of his character, had long endeared him to society; General Lamartilière, whose successful war of posts had so long covered the northern frontier, and many other distinguished warriors, were sent to the scaffold. All showed the same heroism in their last moments, but not greater than was displayed by pacific citizens and young women who had been totally unaccustomed to face danger. Dietrich, mayor of Strasburg, one of the most ardent friends of liberty, wrote to his son the night before his execution, "as he valued his last blessing, never to attempt to revenge his death." One prisoner, alone, excited the indignation of the spectators, by raising piteous cries on the chariot, and striving in a frenzy of terror, with the executioners on the scaffold; it was Madame Dubarry, the associate of the infamous pleasures of Louis XV (3).

The Committee of Public Safety incessantly urged Fouquier-Tinville, the public accuser, to accelerate the executions. He himself declared, in his subsequent trial, "That on one occasion they ordered him to increase them to one hundred and fifty a-day, and that the proposal filled his mind with such

(1) Lac. ii. 147, 157.

(2) Toul. iv. 344. Lac. xi. 423, 424.

(3) Lac. ii. 160.

horror, that as he returned from the Seine, the river appeared to run red with blood." The pretended conspiracy in the prisons served as an excuse for a frightful multiplication in the number of victims. One hundred and sixty victims were denounced in the prison of the Luxembourg alone; and from one to two hundred in all the other prisons of Paris (1). A fabricated attempt at escape in the prison of La Force, was made the ground for sending several hundreds to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Fouquier-Tinville had made such an enlargement of the hall of that dreaded court, that room was afforded for one hundred and sixty to be tried at once; and he proposed to place at the bar the whole prisoners charged with the conspiracy in the Luxembourg at one sitting. He even went so far as to erect a guillotine in the court room, in order to execute the prisoners the moment the sentence was pronounced; but Collot-d'Herbois objected to this, as tending "to demoralize punishment (2)."

The trial of these unhappy captives was as brief as during the massacres in the prisons. "Did you know of the conspiracy of the prisons, Dorival?" "No."—"I expected no other answer, but it will not avail you." To another—"Are not you an ex-noble?" "Yes." To a third—"Are you not a priest?" "Yes, but I have taken the oath." "You have no right to speak; be silent."—"Were not you a chitect to Madame?" "Yes, but I was disgraced in 1788."—"Had you not a father-in-law in the Luxembourg?" "Yes." Such were the questions which constituted the sole trial of the numerous accused; no witnesses were called; their condemnations were pronounced almost as rapidly as their names were called; the law of 22d Prairial had dispensed with the necessity of taking any evidence, when the court were convinced by moral presumptions. The indictments were thrown off by hundreds at once, and the name of the individual merely filled in; the judgments were printed with equal rapidity in a room adjoining the court; and several thousand copies circulated through Paris by little urchins, exclaiming, amidst weeping and distracted crowds,—“Here are the names of those who have gained prizes in

(1) Th. vi. 363, 364. Lac. ii. 161. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 386, 388.

(2) The condition of the prisoners in these jails of Paris, where above ten thousand persons were at last confined, was dreadful beyond what imagination could conceive. The following description is from an eye-witness of their horrors: the fastidiousness of modern manners may revolt at some of its details, but the truth of history requires that they should be recorded. "From the outer-room, where examinations are conducted, you enter by two enormous doors into the dungeons: infected and damp abodes, where enormous rats carry on a continual war against the unhappy wretches who are there accumulated together, gnawing their ears, noses, and clothing, and depriving them of a moment's respite even by sleep. Hardly ever does day light penetrate into the gloomy abodes: the straw which composes the litter of the prisoners soon becomes rotten from want of air, and from the ordure and excrement with which it is covered; and such is the stench thence arising, that a stranger on entering the door feels as if he was suffocated. The prisoners are all either in what are called the straw chambers, or in the dungeons. Thus poverty is there regarded as a fresh crime, and leads to the most dreadful punishment; for a lengthened abode in these horrid receptacles is worse than death itself. The dungeons are never opened but for inspection, to give food to the prisoners, or empty the vases. The su-

perior class of chambers called the straw apartments, do not differ from the dungeons, except in this, that their inhabitants are permitted to go out at eight in the morning, and to remain out till an hour before sunset. During the intervening period, they are allowed to walk in the court, or buddle together in the galleries which surround it, where they are suffocated by infected odours. There is the same accumulation of horror in their sleeping chambers: no air, rotten straw, and perhaps fifty prisoners thrust into one hole with their head lying on their own ordure, surrounded by every species of filth and contagion. Nor were these disgusting circumstances the only degradation which awaited the unhappy prisoners. No one could conceive the degradation to which the human species can be reduced, who had not witnessed the calling of the roll in the evening: when three or four turnkeys, each with half-a-dozen fierce dogs held in a leash, call the unhappy prisoners to answer to their names, threatening, swearing, and insulting; while they are supplicating, weeping, imploring: often they ordered them to go out and come in three or four times over till they were satisfied that the trembling troop was complete: The cells for the women were as horrid as those for the men, equally dark, humid, filthy, crowded, and suffocating: and it was there that all the rank and beauty of Paris was assembled.—Hist. de la Convention, iii. 383, 384.

the lottery of the holy guillotine." The accused were executed at leaving the court, or at latest on the following morning (1).

Since the law of the 22d Prairial had been passed, the heads fell at the rate of fifty or sixty a-day. "This is well," said Fouquier-Tinville; "but we must get on more rapidly in the next decade; one hundred and fifty is the very least that must then be served up." To facilitate this immense increase, spies were sent into the prisons in order to extract from the unhappy wretches their secrets, and designate to the public accuser those who might first be selected. These infamous wretches soon became the terror of the captives. They were enclosed as suspected persons, but their real mission was soon apparent from their insolence, their consequential airs, the preference shown them by the jailers, their orgies at the doors of the cells with the agents of the police. They were caressed, implored by the trembling prisoners, and received whatever little sums they had been able to secrete about their persons, to keep their names out of the black list; but in vain. The names of such as they chose to denounce, were made up in a list called, in the prisons, "The Evening Journal," and the public chariots sent at night-fall to convey them to the Conciergerie preparatory to their trial on the following morning (2).

When the unfortunate captives heard the rolling of the wheels of the cars which were sent to convey them, the most agonizing suspense prevailed in the prisons. They flocked to the wickets of their corridors, placed their ears on the bars to hear the list, and trembled lest their name should be called out by the officers. Those who were named embraced their companions in misfortune, and received their last adieus; often the most heart-rending separations were witnessed; a father tore himself from the arms of his children, a husband from his shrieking wife. Those who survived had reason to envy the lot of those conducted to the den of Fouquier-Tinville; restored to their cells, they remained in a state of suspense worse than death itself, till the same hour on the following night, when the rolling of the chariot wheels renewed the universal agony of the captives (3).

Agony of the Prisoners. To such a degree did the torture of suspense prey upon the minds of the prisoners, that they became not only reckless of life, but anxious for death. The inhabitants who had reason to apprehend detention, became indifferent to all the precautions requisite to secure their safety; many who had escaped, voluntarily surrendered themselves to their persecutors, or waited, on the high-road, the first band of the National Guard to apprehend them. Death of the Princess of Monaco. The young Princess of Monaco, in the flower of youth and beauty, after receiving her sentence, declared herself pregnant, and obtained a respite; the horrors of surviving those she loved, however, so preyed upon her mind, that, the next day, she retracted her declaration, and died with sublime devotion. Madame Lavergne had hoped that, by her intercession, she would move the hearts of the judges in favour of her husband, the commandant of Longwy. When she saw that all was unavailing, and that sentence of death was pronounced, a cry of *Vive le Roi* was heard; all the spectators trembled at the fatal words: *Vive le Roi!* exclaimed his wife in more energetic terms, and when those next her exclaimed that she had lost her reason, she repeated the same words in a calmer voice, so as to

(1) Procès de Fouquier-Tinville. Th. vi. 366, 367.

(2) Th. vi. 368, 369. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 386, 388.

(3) Th. vi. 368, 369.

leave no room for doubt as to her deliberate intention. She obtained the recompense she desired in dying beside her husband. Soon after a sister followed the same method to avoid surviving her brother, and a young woman, to accompany the object of her affection to another world. Servants frequently insisted upon following their masters to prison, and perished with them on the scaffold. Many daughters went on their knees to the members of the Revolutionary Committee, to be allowed to join their parents in captivity, and, when brought to trial, pleaded guilty, though innocent, to the same charges. The efforts of the Court and Jury were unable to make them separate their cases; the tears of their parents even were unavailing; in the generous contention, filial affection prevailed over parental love. A father and son were confined together in the *Maison St.-Lazare*; the latter was involved in one of the fabricated conspiracies of the prison; when his name was called out to stand his trial, his father came forward, and, by personating his son, was the means of saving his life, by dying in his stead.—“Do you know,” said the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal to *Isabeau*, “in whose presence you are standing?”—“Yes,” replied the undaunted young man; “it is here that formerly virtue judged crime, and that now crime murders innocence (1).”

The vengeance of the tyrants fell with peculiar severity upon all whose talents or descent distinguished them from the rest of mankind. The son of *Buffon*, the daughter of *Vernet*, perished without regard to the illustrious names they bore; *Florian*, the eloquent novelist, was so horror-struck with the scenes he had witnessed in prison, that he died after the hour of deliverance had arrived. *Lavoisier* was cut off in the midst of his profound chemical researches; he pleaded in vain for a respite to complete a scientific discovery; almost all the members of the French Academy were in prison, in hourly expectation of their fate. *Roucher*, an amiable poet, a few hours before his death, sent his miniature to his children, accompanied by these touching lines—

*Lavoisier,  
Roucher,  
and others.*

“Ne vous étonnez pas, objets charmans et doux,  
Si quelque air de tristesse obscurcit mon visage;  
Lorsqu'un crayon savant dessinait mon image,  
J'attendais l'échafaud, et je songeais à vous.”

*Chénier*, a young man, whose eloquent writings pointed him out as the future historian of the Revolution, and *Champfort*, one of its earliest and ablest supporters, were executed at the same time. A few weeks longer would have swept off the whole literary talent, as well as dignified names of France (2).

But there is a limit to human suffering; an hour when indignant nature will no longer submit, and courage arises out of despair. To that avenging hour time was fast approaching. The lengthened files of prisoners daily led to the scaffold had long excited the commiseration of the better classes in Paris; the shops in the *Rue St.-Honoré* were shut, and its pavement deserted, when the melancholy procession, moving to the *Place de la Révolution*, passed along. Alarmed at these signs of dissatisfaction, the Committee changed the place of execution, and fixed it at the *Barrière du Trône*, in the *Faubourg St.-Antoine*; but even the workmen of that Revolutionary district manifested impatience at the constant

Horror at length excited by the number and descent of the Executions.

(1) *Lac*. ii. 164, 166.

(2) *Lac*. xi. 48, 49, and *Pr. Hist.* ii. 166, 167. *Th.* vi. 428.



repetition of the dismal spectacle. The middling classes who constituted the strength of the National Guard at Paris, began to be alarmed at the rapid progress and *evident descent* of the proscriptions. At first the nobles and ecclesiastics only were included; by degrees the whole landed proprietors were reached; but now the work of destruction seemed to be fast approaching every class above the lowest. On the lists of the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the latter days of the Reign of Terror, are to be found tailors, shoemakers, hairdressers, butchers, farmers, mechanics, and workmen, accused of anti-revolutionary principles. From the 10th June to the 17th July, that court had sentenced twelve hundred and eighty-five persons to death. The people felt pity for these proscriptions, not only from their frequency, but their near approach to themselves. Their reason was at length awakened by the revolutionary fever having exhausted itself; humanity began to be felt at the ceaseless effusion of human blood, after all their enemies had been destroyed. The Convention eagerly embraced the same sentiments; their conspicuous situation rendered it probable, that they would be among the first victims, and every one, in the hope of saving his own life, ardently prayed for the downfall of the tyrants. But these expressions of public feeling only inspired their oppressors with greater impatience for human blood. "Let us put," said Vadier, "a wall of heads between the people and ourselves."—"The Revolutionary Tribunal," said Billaud-Varenes, "thinks it has made a great effort when it strikes off seventy heads a-day; but the people are easily habituated to what they always behold; to inspire terror we must double the number."—"How timid you are in the capital," said Collot-d'Herbois; "can your ears not stand the sound of artillery? It is a proof of weakness to murder your enemies; you should mow them down with cannon." The Judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, many of whom came from the galleys of Toulon, laboured incessantly at the work of extermination, and mingled indecent ribaldry and jests with their unrelenting cruelty to the crowds of captives who were brought before them. An old man, who had lost the use of speech by a paralytic affection, being placed at the bar, the president exclaimed—"No matter; it is not his tongue, but his head that we want (1)."

The superstition or terrors of Robespierre furnished the first pretext for a combination to shake his power. The members of the different committees, alarmed for their own safety, were secretly endeavouring to undermine his influence, when the fanaticism of an old woman, named Catherine Théot, gave them the means of extending their apprehensions to a larger circle. She proclaimed herself the mother of God, and announced the approaching arrival of a regenerating Messiah. An ancient ally of Robespierre, Dom Gerle, was the associate of her frenzy; they held nocturnal orgies, in which Robespierre was invoked as the Supreme Pontiff. The Committee of Public Safety, who were acquainted with all their proceedings, beheld, or feigned to behold in these extravagancies, a design to make him the head of a new religion, which might add to the force of political power the weight of spiritual fervour. Vadier was intrusted by the Committee with the duty of investigating the mysteries; his report turned the fanatics into derision, but at the same time represented them as worthy of death, and they were accordingly thrown into prison. Robespierre strove to save them, but his colleagues withstood his influence; irritated, he retired

Advantage  
first taken  
of the Su-  
perstition of  
Robes-  
pierre.

(1) Lac. xi. 53, 56. Th. vi. 370. Mig. ii. 327.

from their meetings, and confined himself to the Club of the Jacobins, where his power was still predominant (1).

Suspicious  
of Robes-  
pierre awa-  
kened.

Naturally suspicious, the apprehensions of the tyrant now increased to the highest degree. His house was guarded by a body of Jacobins, armed with pistols, chiefly composed of jurymen from the Revolutionary Tribunal. He never went out but attended by this obnoxious band. His table was covered by letters, in which he was styled "the Envoy of God," the "New Messiah," the "New Orpheus." On every side his portrait was to be seen in marble, bronze, or canvass, and below each, lines in which the Jacobinical poets, extolled him above Cato and Aristides. But all his efforts, and all the adulation of his satellites, could not dispel the terrors which had seized his mind. On his desk, after his death, was found a letter, in the following terms:—"You yet live! assassin of your country, stained with the purest blood in France. I wait only the time when the people shall strike the hour of your fall. Should my hope prove vain, this hand which now writes thy sentence, this hand which presses thine with horror, shall pierce thee to the heart. Every day I am with thee; every hour my uplifted arm is ready to cut short thy life. Worst of men, live yet a few days to be tortured by the fear of my vengeance; this very night, in seeing thee, I shall enjoy thy terrors; but thy eyes shall seek in vain my avenging form (2)."

Henriot and  
St.-Just urge  
vigorous  
Measures.

His violent partisans strongly urged the immediate adoption of the most vigorous measures. Henriot, and the Mayor of Paris, were ready to commence a new massacre, and had a body of three thousand young assassins, ready to aid those of September 2; St.-Just and Couthon were gained in the Committee of Public Safety; the President Dumas, and the Vice-President Coffinhal, were to be depended on in the Revolutionary Tribunal. "Strike soon and strongly," said St.-Just. "DARE! that is the sole secret of Revolutions (3)." They had already marked out Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Thuriot, Rovère, Lecointre, Panis, Monestier, Legendre, Fréron, Barras, and Cambon, as the first victims. But the conspirators had no armed force at their command; the Club of the Jacobins, which they wielded at pleasure, was only powerful from its weight on public opinion; the Committees of Government were all arrayed on the other side. Robespierre, therefore, was compelled to commence the attack in the Convention; he expected to sway them by the terror of his voice; or if, contrary to all former precedent, they held out, his reliance was on the Municipality, and an insurrection of the people, similar to that which had been so successful on the 31st May. By their aid he hoped to effect the proscription of the Committee of Public Safety, and their associates in the Mountain, as he had formerly done that of the Girondists, and of the Committee of Twelve (4).

(1) Mig. ii. 328. Lac. xi. 59. 61. Th. vi. 336, 337, 356, 357.

(2) Mig. ii. 328. Lac. xi. 63, 66.

(3) The secret designs of Robespierre are clearly revealed in the following letter, written to him at this period by Payne, his creature in the Municipality of Paris. "The change, of all others most essential, is to augment the powers of the central government,—all our authority is useless; it is by augmenting the central power that alone any good can be done. Would you strike to the earth the refractory deputies, obtain great victories in the interior; bring forward a report which may strike at once against all the disaffected;—pass salutary

decrees to restrain the journals; render all the public functionaries responsible to you alone: let them be incessantly occupied in centralizing public opinion: hitherto your efforts have been confined to the centralizing of the physical government. I repeat it: you require a vast report, which may embrace at once all the conspirators, bleed them altogether; the Dantonists, the Royalists, the Orleanists, the Hebertists, the Lafayetteists, the Bourdon-de-l'Oisists.—Commence the great work."—Hist. de la Conv. iv. 62, 63.

(4) Mig. ii. 329, 331. Lac. xi. 67, 69. Th. vi. 355, 409.

21st July,  
1794.

In a meeting of the Jacobins, held on the 3d Thermidor (21st July), he prepared the minds of the audience for a revolt against the Convention. "The Assembly," said he, "labouring under the gangrene of corruption, and unable to throw off its impurities, is incapable of saving the

Insurrec-  
tion agreed  
on at the  
Jacobins.

Republic; both will perish; the proscription of the patriots is the order of the day. For myself, I have one foot in the grave; in a few days I will place the other in it; the result is in the hands of Providence (1)." The Jacobins were by these and similar addresses prepared for a Revolutionary movement, but the secret of the insurrection, which was fixed for the 9th Thermidor, was confided only to Henriot and the Mayor of Paris.

Measures  
of the Con-  
vention to  
resist it.

The leaders of the Convention, and of the Committees on their side, were not idle. The immediate pressure of danger had united all parties against the tyrant. He made no secret in the popular society of his resolution to decimate the Assembly. At leaving one of the meetings where his designs had been openly expressed, Barrère exclaimed, "That Robespierre is insatiable; because we won't do every thing he wishes, he threatens to break with us. If he speaks to us of Thuriot, Guffroi, Rovère, and all the party of Danton, we understand him; even should he demand Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Legendre, Fréron, we may consent in good time; but to ask Duval, Audouin, Léonard Bourdon, Vadier, Voulland, is out of the question. To proscribe members of the Committee of General Safety, is to put the poniard to all our throats." Impressed with these feelings, they resolved to stand on their guard; though they did not venture to commence an attack on Robespierre, whose name was terrible, and influence still so much the object of dread. Tallien was the leader of the party, an intrepid man, and an old supporter of the Revolutionary tyranny, but who had been awakened, during his sanguinary mission to Bordeaux, to better feelings, by the influence of a young woman, afterwards well known as Madame Tallien, of extraordinary beauty, and more than masculine firmness of character (2).

Contest be-  
gins in As-  
sembly.

Robes-  
pierre's  
speech.

At length, on the 8th Thermidor (26th July), the contest began in the National Convention. The discourse of Robespierre was dark and enigmatical: "I come," said he, "to defend your outraged authority, and violated independence; I also will defend myself; you will not be taken by surprise, for you have nothing in common with the tyrants whom you combat. To what faction do I belong? To yourselves. What is the party, which ever since the commencement of the Revolution, has crushed faction, and swept off the traitors? It is yourselves, the people, the force of principles. That is my party. For six weeks I have been reduced to a state of impotence in the Committee of Public Safety; during that time has faction been better restrained, or the country more happy? Representatives of the people, the time has arrived when you should resume the attitude which befits you; you are not placed here to be governed, but to govern the depositaries of your confidence. Let it be spoken out at once; a conspiracy exists against the public freedom; it springs from a criminal intrigue in the bosom of the Convention; that intrigue is conducted by the members of the Committee of General Safety; the enemies of the Republic have contrived to array that Committee against the Committee of Public

(1) Mig. ii. 330. Lac. xi. 68. Th. vi. 411.

(2) Mig. ii. 329. Lac. xi. 69, 70. Th. v. 410.

Safety; even some members of this latter Committee have been infected; and the coalition thus formed seeks to ruin the country. What is the remedy for the evil? To punish the traitors; to purge the Committees of their unworthy members; to place the Committee of General Safety under the control of that of Public Safety; to establish the unity of government under the auspices of the Convention; and thus to crush faction under the weight of the national representation, and raise on its ruins the power of justice and freedom (1)."

This speech was received with breathless attention; not a sound was heard during its delivery; not a whisper of applause followed its close. At the proposal that it should be printed, the first symptoms of resistance began—Bourdon de l'Oise opposed its publication; but Barrère having supported it, the Assembly, fearful of committing itself openly with its enemies, agreed to the proposal. The members of the Committee of General Safety seeing the majority wavering, deemed it now necessary to take decisive steps. "It is no longer time," said Cambon, "for dissembling; one man paralyses the Assembly, and that man is Robespierre."—"We must pull the mask off any countenance on which it is placed," said Billaud-Varennes, "I would rather that my carcass served for a throne to the tyrant, than render myself by my silence, the accomplice of his crimes."—"It is not enough," said Vadier, "for him to be a tyrant; he aims farther, like a second Mahomet, at being proclaimed the envoy of God." Fréron proposed to throw off the hated yoke of the Committees. "The moment is at last arrived," said he, "to revive the liberty of opinion; I propose that the Assembly reverse the decree which permitted the arrest of the representatives of the people; who can debate with freedom, when imprisonment is hanging over his head?" Some applause followed this proposal; but Robespierre was felt to be too powerful to be overthrown by the Convention, unaided by the Committees; this extreme measure therefore was rejected, and the Assembly contented itself with reversing the decree which ordered the publication of his address, and sent it to the Committees for examination. Robespierre retired, surprised at the resistance he had experienced, but still confident of success on the following day, from the insurrection of the Jacobins, and of the Municipality (2).

Extraordi-  
nary Meet-  
ing at the  
Jacobins.

In the evening he repaired to the popular society, where he was received with enthusiasm. Henriot, Dumas, Coffinhal, and his other satellites surrounded him, and declared themselves ready for action. "I know," says Henriot, "the road to the Convention, and I am ready to take it again."—"Go," said Robespierre, "separate the wicked from the weak; deliver the Assembly from the wretches who enthrall it; render it the service which it expects from you, as you did on the 31st May and the 2d June. March! you may yet save liberty!" After describing the attacks directed against his person, he added, "I am ready, if necessary, to drink the cup of Socrates."—"Robespierre," exclaimed one of the deputies, "I am ready to drink it with you; the enemies of Robespierre are those of the country; let them be named, and they shall cease to exist." During all the night he made arrangements for the disposal of his partisans on the following day. Their points of rendezvous were fixed at the hall of the Jacobins, and the Hôtel-de-

(1) Mig. ii. 334. Lac. xi. 77, 78. Th. vi. 419, 420.

(2) Mig. ii. 334, 335. Lac. xi. 79, 80. Th. vi. 421, 424.

Ville, where they were to be in readiness to receive his orders from the National Assembly (1).

Mutual Preparations. The two Committees on their side were not idle. During the whole night they sat in deliberation. It was felt by every one that a combination of all parties was required to shake the redoubted power of Robespierre. All their efforts accordingly were directed to this object. St.-Just continued firm to his leader, but by unremitting exertions, the Jacobins of the Mountain succeeded in forming a coalition with the leaders of the Plain and of the Right. "Do not flatter yourselves," said Tallien to the Girondists, "that he will ever spare you; you have committed an unpardonable offence in being freemen. Let us bury our ruinous divisions in oblivion. You weep for Vergniaud; we weep for Danton; let us unite their shades by striking Robespierre." "Do you still live?" said he to the Jacobins; "has the tyrant spared you this night? yet your names are the foremost on the list of proscription. In a few days he will have your heads, if you do not take his. For two months you have shielded us from his strokes; you may now rely on our support as our gratitude." The friends of Danton were so exasperated at the death of their leader that they long resisted all advances towards a reconciliation; but at length moved by the entreaties of the Plain and the Right, they agreed to join the coalition. Before daybreak, all the Assembly had united for the overthrow of the tyrant (2).

July 27, 1794. Meeting of the 19th Thermidor. At an early hour on the morning of the 9th Thermidor (27th July), the benches of the Convention were thronged by its members; those of the Mountain were particularly remarkable for the serried ranks and determined looks of the coalition. The leaders walked about the passages, confirming each other in their generous resolution. Bourdon de l'Oise pressed Durand-Maillane by the hand, Rovère and Tallien followed his example. The latter evinced that undoubting confidence which is so often the presage and cause of success. "Take your place," said he, looking around him; "I have come to witness the triumph of freedom; this evening Robespierre is no more." At noon St.-Just mounted the Tribune: Robespierre took his station on the bench directly opposite, to intimidate his adversaries by his look. His knees trembled, the colour fled from his lips as he ascended to his seat; the hostile appearance of the assembly already gave him an anticipation of his fate (3).

St.-Just commenced a speech from the Tribune. "I belong," said he, "to no party; I will combat them all. The course of events has possibly determined that this Tribune should be the Tarpeian rock for him who now tells you that the members of the committees have strayed from the path of wisdom." Upon this he was violently interrupted by Tallien, who took the lead in the revolt. "Shall the speaker," said he, "for ever arrogate to himself, with the tyrant of whom he is the satellite, the privilege of denouncing, accusing, and proscribing the members of the Assembly? Shall he for ever go on amusing us with imaginary perils, when real and pressing dangers are before our eyes? After the enigmatical expressions of the tyrant yesterday from that place, can we doubt what St.-Just is about to propose? You are about," said he, "to raise the veil; I will tear it asunder!" Loud applauses

(1) Mig. ii. 336. Th. ii. 426, 427. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 39, 64.

(2) Mig. ii. 336. Lac. vi. 88—93. Th. vi. 430, 431.

(3) Lac. xi. 94. Mig. ii. 336, 337. Th. vi. 432. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 123.

on all sides followed this exclamation. "Yes," exclaimed he, "I will tear it asunder; I will exhibit the danger in its full extent; the tyrant in his true colours. It is the whole Convention which he now proposes to destroy; he knows well, since his overthrow yesterday, that however much he may mutilate that great body, he will no longer find it the instrument of his tyrannical designs. He is resolved that no sanctuary should exist for freedom, no retreat for the friends of the Republic. He has in consequence resolved to destroy you all; yes, this very day, ay, in a few hours. Two thousand assassins have sworn to execute his designs; I myself last night heard their oaths, and fifty of my colleagues heard them with me. The massacre was to have commenced in the night with the Committee of Public Safety and of General Security, all of whom were to have been sacrificed except a few creatures of the tyrant; the fidelity of the soldiers, who feared the Convention, alone has preserved them from this terrible calamity. Let us instantly take measures commensurate to the magnitude of the danger; let us declare our sittings permanent, till the conspiracy is broken, and its chiefs arrested. I have no difficulty in naming them; I have followed their steps through their bloody conjuration: I name Dumas, the atrocious President of the Revolutionary Tribunal; I name Henriot, the infamous commander of the National Guard." Here Billaud-Varennes interrupted the orator, and gave some fuller details on the conspiracy which had been matured in the Society of the Jacobins, and denounced Robespierre as its chief. "The Assembly will perish," he concluded, "if it shows the least signs of weakness."—"We shall never perish," exclaimed the members rising in a transport of enthusiasm from their seats. Tallien resumed: "Can there be any doubt now about the reality of the conspiracy? have you conquered so many tyrants only to crouch beneath the yoke of the most atrocious of them all? The charge against Robespierre is already written in your hearts. Is there a voice among you which will declare that he is not an oppressor? If there is, let him stand forth, for him have I offended. Tremble, tyrant, tremble! see with what horror freemen shrink from your polluted touch. We enjoy your agony, but the public safety requires it should no longer be prolonged. I declare, if the National Convention hesitate to pass the decree of accusation, I will plunge this dagger in your bosom;" and he drew the glittering steel from his breast in the midst of the Assembly, which resounded with applause (1).

Consternation of Robespierre. During this impassioned harangue, which was pronounced with the most vehement action, Robespierre sat motionless with terror. The Convention, amidst a violent tumult, decreed the arrest of Henriot, Dumas, and his other associates; and their own permanence, and numerous measures of precaution, were suggested. But Tallien, who perceived that amidst these multifarious proposals the main object of destroying Robespierre was likely to be forgot, resumed his place in the Tribune. "Let us think only of the tyrant; you have not a moment to lose, he is every hour collecting his strength. Why accumulate charges, when his conduct is engraven on every heart? Let him perish by the arm he has invented to destroy others. To what accused did he ever give the right of speaking in his defence? Let us say with the juries of the Revolutionary Tribunal, 'Our minds have long been made up.' If you declare him *hors la loi*, can he complain who has put *hors la loi* nine-tenths of France? Let there be no formalities with the

(1) Lac. xi, 98, 99. Mig. ii. 338. Th. vi. 431—435.

accused, you cannot too much abridge their punishment; he has told you so himself a hundred times. Let us strike him in the bosom of the Assembly; let his associates perish with him on the bench of the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the Club of the Jacobins, at the head of the traitorous Municipality (1)."

Robespierre tried in vain, during the tumult which followed this address, to obtain a hearing. The President, Thuriot, whom he had often threatened with death, constantly drowned his voice by ringing his bell. In vain he looked for support among the former satellites of his power; all frozen with terror shrunk from his gaze. *A bas le tyran!* resounded from all sides of the hall. In despair, he turned to the few survivors of the Girondists. "Retire from these benches," they exclaimed; "Vergniaud and Condorcet have sat here."—"Pure and virtuous citizens," said he, to the deputies on the right, "will you give me the liberty of speech, which the assassins refuse?" A profound silence followed the demand. "For the last time, President of assassins," said he, turning to the chair, "will you allow me to speak?" The continued noise drowned his voice. He then sunk on his seat pale and exhausted; his voice, which had become a shrill scream from agitation and vehemence (2), at length totally failed; foam issued from his mouth. "Wretch!" exclaimed a voice from the Mountain, "You are choked by the blood of Danton." "Ah! you would avenge Danton," rejoined Robespierre: "cowards, why did you not defend him?" "Citizens," exclaimed Billaud-Varennes, "liberty is about to be restored."—"Say rather," replied Robespierre, "that crime is about to triumph," as he left the hall with the other proscribed deputies (3).

The act of accusation was then carried amidst the most violent agitation. The younger brother of Robespierre had the generosity to insist that he should be included in the charge. "I am as culpable as my brother," said he; "I share his virtues, I am willing to share his fate." Lebas followed his example. At length the two Robespierres, Lebas, Couthon, St.-Just, Dumas, and Henriot, were unanimously put under arrest, and sent to prison; and the Assembly broke up at five o'clock (4).

During this stormy contest the partisans of Robespierre were collecting at the Hall of the Jacobins, and at the Hotel-de-Ville. They expected that he would be victorious in the Convention, and that the armed force would only be called on to support its decrees. Part of the National Guard were assembled at the rendezvous, when a messenger arrived from the Convention requiring the Mayor to appear at the bar, and give an account of the state of the capital. "Return to your associates," said Henriot, "and say that we are in deliberation here how to purify their ranks. Tell Robespierre to remain firm and fear nothing (5)." At half-past four they received intelligence of the arrest of Robespierre and his accomplices, which soon circulated with the rapidity of lightning through Paris. Instantly they gave orders to sound the tocsin, close the barriers, convoke the General Council, and assemble the Sections. The Jacobins declared their sittings permanent, and the most rapid means of communication were established between these two great centres of the insurrection (6).

(1) Lac. xi. 100—102. Mig. ii. 338, 339.

(2) Mig. ii. 339. Lac. xi. 103. Th. vi. 437, 438: Toul. iv. 382.

(3) Levasseur, iii. 147.

(4) Mig. ii. 340. Lac. xi. 104. Toul. iv. 383.

(5) Mig. ii. 340. Lac. xi. 105, 108. Th. vi. 443.

(6) The following proclamation was immediately issued from the Hotel-de-Ville. "Brothers and

To excite the people to revolt, Henriot, with a drawn sabre in his hand, at the head of his staff, traversed the streets, exclaiming, "To arms to save the country!"—In his course through the Faubourg St.-Antoine, he met the procession of eighty prisoners proceeding as usual to execution: the crowd had stopped the chariots, and loudly demanded that they should be released: but he had the barbarity to order them to be led on, and they all suffered. On his return, two deputies of the Convention met him in the Rue St.-Honoré, and prevailed on some horsemen to obey the orders of the Convention, and arrest his person; he was handcuffed, and conducted to the Committee of General Safety. About the same time the national agent Payan was seized; the Convention seemed triumphant, its principal enemies were in confinement (1).

Robespierre is imprisoned, but liberated.

But the insurgents regained their advantage between six and seven o'clock, in consequence of the dispersion of the members of the Assembly, and the energetic measures of the Municipality. Robespierre had been sent to the Conciergerie, and the other conspirators to the different prisons in Paris. The magistrates sent detachments to deliver them; Robespierre was speedily brought in triumph to the Hotel-de-Ville, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm, and soon joined by his brother and St.-Just. Coffinhal set off at the head of two hundred cannoners to deliver Henriot; he arrived in the Place du Carrousel, and having forced the guard of the Convention, penetrated to the rooms of the Committee of General Safety, and delivered that important leader (2).

The Assembly met at seven o'clock. Intelligence was immediately brought of the fearful successes of the insurgents, their insurrectionary measures, the liberation of the Triumvirs, the assemblage at the Hôtel-de-Ville, the convocation of Revolutionary Committees, and of the sections. In the midst of the alarm, the members of the two committees, driven from their offices, arrived in consternation with the account of the forcing of the Tuileries, the delivery of Henriot, and the presence of an armed force round the Convention. The agitation was at its height, when Amar entered and announced that the terrible cannoners had pointed their guns against the walls of their hall. "Citizens," said the President, covering his face with his robe, "the hour is arrived to die at our posts."—"We are ready to die," exclaimed the members. Animated by a sublime resolution, every one spontaneously resumed his seat, and the Assembly unanimously took the oath. The vociferous crowd in the gallery at the same time disappeared (3).

Firmness of Tallien and his Party.

In this extremity, Tallien and his friends acted with the firmness which in revolutions so often proves successful. "Every thing conspires," said he, "to assure the triumph of the Convention, and the liberty

Friends, the country is in imminent danger: the wicked have mastered the Convention, where they hold in chains the virtuous Robespierre, who passed the decree so consoling to humanity on the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul: Couthon, that venerable citizen, who has but a heart and a head alive, though both are burning with patriotism: St.-Just, that virtuous apostle, who first checked treason in the army of the Rhine and the north, Lebas, their worthy colleague; the younger Robespierre, so well known for his labours with the army of Italy: and who are their enemies? Collot-d'Herbois, an old comedian, convicted under the old regime of having stolen the strong box of

his troop of players: Bourdon de l'Oise, that perpetual calumniator of the Municipality of Paris: one Barrère, the ready tool of every faction which is uppermost: one Tallien, and Fréron, intimate friends of the infamous Danton. To arms! To arms! let us not lose the fruit of the 18th August, and the 2d June. Death to the traitors." *Hist. de la Conv.* iv. 160, 161.

(1) *Lac.* xi. 109. *Toul.* iv. 384, 385. *Mig.* ii. 341. *Th.* vi. 442, 443. *Hist. de la Conv.* vi. 164.

(2) *Mig.* ii. 342. *Th.* vi. 445. *Lac.* xi. 109.

(3) *Lac.* xi. 112. *Mig.* ii. 342. *Th.* vi. 446, 447. *Toul.* iv. 380—383, 386. *Hist. de la Conv.* iv. 179.



of France. By his revolt, Robespierre has opened to us the only path which is safe with tyrants. Thank Heaven, to deliver our country, we need not now await the uncertain decisions of a tribunal filled with his creatures. He has brought his fate upon himself; let us declare him *hors la loi* with all his accomplices; let us include the rebellious Municipality in the decree; let us besiege him in the centre of his power; let us instantly convoke the Sections, and allow the public horror to manifest itself by actions. Name a commander of the armed force; there must be no hesitation; in such a strife, he who assumes the offensive commands success." All these decrees were instantly passed; Henriot was declared *hors la loi*, and Barras named to the command of the military force; Fréron, Bourdon de l'Oise, and other determined men, associated with him in the perilous duty. The Committee of Public Safety was now fixed on as the centre of operations; the générale beat, and emissaries were instantly despatched to all the Sections, to summon them to the defence of the Convention (1); while a macer was despatched to summon the Municipality to the bar of the Assembly: but such was the arrogance of that body in the anticipation of immediate victory that they returned for answer, "Yes, we shall come to their bar: but at the head of the insurgent people (2)."

The Cannoneers desert Henriot in the Place du Carrousel. While the government were adopting these energetic measures, Henriot was haranguing the cannoneers in the Place du Carrousel. The fate of France hung on their decision; could he have persuaded them to act, the Convention would have been destroyed before the tardy succours could arrive from the remote quarters of the capital. Happily they could not be brought to fire on the legislature, and their refusal decided the fortune of the day. Dispirited at this unwonted failure with the troops, and alarmed at the cries which broke from the multitude as soon as the decrees of the Assembly were known, he withdrew to the Hôtel-de-Ville, the armed force followed his example, and the Convention, so recently besieged within its walls, speedily became the assailing party (3).

Dreadful agitation at Paris. Paris was soon in the most violent state of agitation. The tocsin summoned the citizens to the Hôtel-de-Ville, the générale called them to the Convention, the Deputies of the Assembly, and the Commissioners of the Municipality, met in the Sections, and strove for the mastery in those important bodies. On all sides the people hastened to arms; the streets were filled by multitudes crowding to their different rallying points; cries of *Vive la Convention! Vive la Commune!* broke forth in the different columns, according to the prevailing opinion of their members; while the rolling of cannon and ammunition waggons by torchlight towards the Hôtel-de-Ville, gave a fearful presage of the contest that was approaching (4).

The emissaries of the Municipality first arrived at the rendezvous of the Sections; but the National Guard, distracted and uncertain, hesitated to obey the summons of the magistrates. They could only be brought, in the first instance, to send deputations to the Commune, to enquire into the state of affairs. Meanwhile, the news of Robespierre's arrest circulated with rapidity, and a ray of hope shot through the minds of numerous proscribed individuals, who were in concealment in the city. With trembling steps they issued from their hiding-places, and approaching the columns of their fellow-citizens, besought them to assist in dethroning the tyrant. The minds of many were

(1) Toul. iv. 387. Th. vi. 447, 448. Lac. xi. 112. (3) Lac. xi. 113. Toul. iv. 387, 388. Mig. ii. 113. Mig. ii. 342. 343. Th. vi. 448.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. iv. 177.

(4) Lac. xi. 115. Mig. ii. 343. Toul. iv. 388.

already shaken, those of all in a state of uncertainty, when, at ten o'clock, the Commissioners of the Convention arrived with the intelligence of their decrees, of the summons to assist them, of the appointment of a commander-in-chief, and of a rallying point, at the hall of the Assembly. Upon this they no longer hesitated; the battalions of the National Guard from all quarters marched towards the Convention, and defiled through the hall in the midst of the most enthusiastic applause. At midnight, above three thousand men had arrived. "The moments are precious," said Fréron, "the time for action has come. Let us instantly march against the rebels; we will summon them in the name of the Assembly, to deliver up the traitors, and, if they refuse, we will lay the Hôtel-de-Ville in ashes." "Depart," said Tallien, "and let the rising sun not shine on one of the conspirators in life." The order was promptly obeyed; a few battalions and pieces of artillery were left to guard the Assembly, and the remainder of the forces, under the command of Barras, marched at midnight against the insurgents. The night was dark, a feeble moonlight only shone through the gloom; but the forced illumination of the houses supplied a vivid light, which shone on the troops, who in profound silence, and in serried masses, marched from the Tuileries along the quays of the river, towards the Place de Grève, the head-quarters of the insurgents (1).

The tumult now became so violent, that, at length, the sound reached the prisons. The unhappy inmates of their gloomy cells, put their ears to the bars of the windows, listened to every sound, and yet trembled lest the agitation should be the prelude to a general massacre of the captives. Soon, however, the downcast looks of the jailers, words whispered to the ears of the framers of the lists, and the consternation of these wretches, threw a ray of hope through their despairing minds. Shortly after, it was discovered, by half-suppressed words heard in the streets, that Robespierre was in danger; the relations of the captives placed themselves under the windows, and informed them by signs of what was passing, and then the exhilaration of the prisoners broke out into the most vehement and tumultuous joy (2).

Prepara-  
tions at the  
Hôtel-de-  
Ville.

Meanwhile, the adherents of Robespierre, consisting almost entirely of the cannoneers, and of the armed force commanded by Henriot, who were composed of the very lowest of the rabble, had assembled in great force at the Hôtel-de-Ville. The Place de Grève was filled with artillery, bayonets, and pikes; Robespierre had been received with the utmost enthusiasm, and the delivery of Henriot raised to the highest pitch the confidence of the conspirators. But as the night advanced, and no columns of the National Guard arrived, this confidence gave place to the most sinister presentiments. Even in the Faubourg St.-Antoine, the centre of all former insurrections, the delegates of the Municipality failed in rousing the populace. "What the better have we been," said they, "of all the insurrections? What has Robespierre done for us? Where are the riches, all the fields he promised us? When we are dying of famine, does he expect to satisfy us by the daily spectacle of an hundred aristocrats dying on the scaffold? Does he suppose we are cannibals, to feed on human flesh, and drink human blood? He has done nothing for us (3); we will do nothing for him." Such was the language of the populace in the most revolutionary quarter of Paris; the fever

(1) Mig. ii. 343, 344. Lac. xi. 114, 116. Toul. v. 389. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 189, 190.

(2) Th. vi. 450, 451.

(3) Lac. xi. 114, 115. Mig. ii. 344. Toul. iv. 389.

of innovation had exhausted itself; even the lowest of the people were dissatisfied with the rulers they had chosen for themselves.

The Cannoneers de-  
sert Robes-  
pierre, who  
is arrested.

At midnight the rumour began loudly to spread through the ranks of the insurgents, that the Municipality had been declared *hors la loi*, that the Sections had joined the Convention, and that their forces were advancing against the insurgents. To obviate its impression, Payan read aloud in the council-room the decree of the Convention, and inserted in it the names of all those of their party whom he observed in the gallery, hoping thereby to attach them from desperation to the cause of Robespierre; but an opposite effect immediately ensued, as they all instantly took to flight, leaving the gallery deserted. Nor did affairs wear a more promising aspect out of doors. There were about two thousand men stationed in the Place de Grève, with a powerful train of artillery; but their dispositions were already much shaken by the obvious defection of their fellow-citizens, when the light of the torches showed the heads of the columns of the National Guards appearing in all the avenues which led to the square. The moment was terrible; ten pieces of the artillery of the Convention were placed in battery, while the cannoneers of the Municipality, with their lighted matches in their hands, stood beside their guns on the opposite side. But the authority of the law prevailed; the decree of the Legislature was read by torchlight, and the insurgent troops refused to resist it (1). Some emissaries of the Convention glided into the ranks of the Municipality, and raised the cry, *Vive la Convention!* the insurgents were moved by the harangue of Meda, the commander of the National Artillery, and, in a short time, the Place de Grève was deserted, and the whole cannoneers retired to their homes, or ranged themselves on the side of the Assembly.

Henriot descended the stair of the Hôtel-de-Ville, but seeing the square deserted, he vented his execrations on his faithless followers, who had, for the most part, abandoned the King in the same manner on the 10th August, and hastened back to his comrades. The conspirators finding themselves unsupported, gave themselves up to despair; the National Guard rushed rapidly up the stair, and entered the room where Robespierre and the leaders of the revolt were assembled. Robespierre was sitting with his elbow on his knee, and his head resting on his hand; Meda discharged his pistol, which broke his under jaw, and he fell under the table (2). St.-Just implored Lebas to put an end to his life. "Coward, follow my example," said he, and blew out his brains. Couthon was seized under a table, feebly attempting to strike with a knife, which he wanted the courage to plunge in his heart; Coffinhal, and the younger Robespierre, threw themselves from the windows, and were seized in the inner court of the building. Henriot had been thrown down the stair by Coffinhal, but though bruised and mutilated, he contrived to crawl into the entrance of a sewer, from whence he was dragged out by the troops of the Convention (3).

Dreadful  
Scene at his  
Seizure.

Robespierre and Couthon being supposed to be dead, were dragged by the heels to the Quai Pelletier, where it was proposed to throw them into the river; but it being discovered, when day returned, that they

(1) Th. vi. 482. Mig. ii. 344. Meda, Rev. Mem. xlii. 383. Hist. de la Conv. xv. 193.

(2) Many authors affirm that Robespierre shot himself. That he had a pistol in his hand is certain; but Levasseur de la Sarthe and Meda, the gentlemen who arrested him, agree in stating that his

jaw was broken by a shot fired by the last of these parties.—See Levasseur, iii. 154. Med. 385.

(3) Lac. xi. 117. Mig. ii. 345. Th. vi. 454—455. Meda, Rev. Mem. xlii. 385. Levasseur, iii. 154. Toul. iv. 390.

still breathed, they were stretched on a board, and carried to the Assembly. The members having refused to admit them, they were conveyed to the Committee of General Safety, where Robespierre lay for nine hours, stretched on a table, the same with that where he had signed the death-warrant of so many noble citizens, with his broken jaw still bleeding, and suffering alike under bodily pain, and the execrations and insults of those around him. During the whole time that this cruel torture lasted, he evinced a stoical apathy; foam merely issued from his mouth, which the humanity of some around him led them to wipe off; but his finger, still with convulsive energy, was fixed on the holster of the pistol which he had not had the courage to discharge (1). From thence, he was sent to the Conciergerie, where he was confined in the same cell which had been occupied by Danton, Hébert, and Chaumette. At length he was brought, with all his associates, to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and as soon as the identity of their persons was established, they were condemned (2).

Executed  
with St.-  
Just, Hen-  
riot, Cou-  
thon, and all  
their Party.

At four in the morning, on the 29th July, all Paris was in motion to witness the death of the tyrant. He was placed on the chariot, between Henriot and Couthon, whose remains were as mutilated as his own; the crowd, which for long had ceased to attend the executions, manifested the utmost joy at their fate. He was conducted to the Place de la Révolution; the scaffold was placed on the spot where Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette had suffered. The blood from his jaw burst through the bandage, and overflowed his dress; his face was ghastly pale. He shut his eyes, but could not close his ears against the imprecations of the multitude. A woman breaking from the crowd, exclaimed—"Murderers of all my kindred, your agony fills me with joy; descend to hell, covered with the curses of every mother in France!" Twenty of his comrades were executed before him; when he ascended the scaffold, the executioner tore the bandage from his face; the lower jaw fell upon his breast, and he uttered a yell, which filled every heart with horror. For some minutes the frightful figure was held up to the multitude; he was then placed under the axe, and the last sounds which reached his ears were the exulting shouts, which were prolonged for some minutes after his death (3).

Along with Robespierre were executed, Henriot, Couthon, St.-Just, Damas, Coffinhal, Simon, and all the leaders of the revolt. St.-Just alone displayed the firmness, which had so often been witnessed among the victims whom they had sent to the scaffold. Couthon wept with terror; the others died uttering blasphemies, which were drowned in the cheers of the people. They shed tears for joy, they embraced each other in transport, they crowded round the scaffold to behold the bloody remains of the tyrants. "Yes, Robespierre, there is a God!" said a poor man as he approached the lifeless body of one so lately the object of dread; his fall was felt by all present as an immediate manifestation of the Divinity (4).

Reflections  
on the  
Revolution

Thus terminated the Reign of Terror, a period fraught with greater political instruction than any of equal duration which has existed since the beginning of the world. In no former period had the efforts of the people so completely triumphed, or the higher orders been so

de la Conv. iv. 203. Levass. iii. 155.

Mem. xxiii. 70. Mig. ii. 345.

lii. 386. Th. vi. 456. Lac. xi.

(3) Mig. ii. 346. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 213. Toul.

iv. 391. Th. vi. 457. Lac. xi. 120. Levass.

(4) Lac. xi. 120. Mig. ii. 346. Th. vi. 457.

thoroughly crushed by the lower. The throne had been overturned, the altar destroyed; the aristocracy levelled with the dust, the nobles were in exile, the clergy in captivity, the gentry in affliction. A merciless sword had waved over the state, destroying alike the dignity of rank, the splendour of talent, and the graces of beauty. All that excelled the labouring classes in situation, fortune, or acquirement, had been removed; they had triumphed over their oppressors, seized their possessions, and risen into their stations. And what was the consequence? The establishment of a more cruel and revolting tyranny than any which mankind had yet witnessed; the destruction of all the charities and enjoyments of life; the dreadful spectacle of streams of blood flowing through every part of France. The earliest friends, the warmest advocates, the firmest supporters of the people, were swept off indiscriminately with their bitterest enemies; in the unequal struggle, virtue and philanthropy sunk under ambition and violence, and society returned to a state of chaos, when all the elements of private or public happiness were scattered to the winds. Such are the results of unchaining the passions of the multitude; such the peril of suddenly admitting the light upon a benighted people (1).

The facility with which a faction, composed of a few of the most audacious and reckless of the nation, triumphed over the immense majority of all the holders of property in the kingdom, and led them forth like victims to the sacrifice, is not the least extraordinary or memorable part of that eventful

(1) The extent to which blood was shed in France during this melancholy period, will hardly be credited by future ages. The Republican Prudhomme, whose prepossessions led him to any thing rather

than an exaggeration of the horrors of the popular party, has given the following appalling account of the victims of the Revolution :

		Nobles, . . . . .	1,278	
		Noble women, . . . . .	750	
		Wives of labourers and artisans, . . . . .	1,467	
		Religieuses, . . . . .	350	
		Priests, . . . . .	1,135	
		Common persons, not noble, . . . . .	13,623	
		<b>Guillotined by sentence of the Revolutionary Tribunal, . . . . .</b>	<b>18,603</b>	<b>18,603</b>
		Women died of premature child-birth, . . . . .	3,400	
		In child-birth from grief, . . . . .	348	
		Women killed in la Vendée, . . . . .	15,000	
		Children killed in la Vendée, . . . . .	22,000	
		Men slain in la Vendée, . . . . .	900,000	
		Victims under Carrier at Nantes, . . . . .	32,000	
Of whom were	Children shot, . . . . .	500		
	Children drowned, . . . . .	1,500		
	Women shot, . . . . .	264		
	Women drowned, . . . . .	500		
	Priests shot, . . . . .	300		
	Priests drowned, . . . . .	460		
	Nobles drowned, . . . . .	1,400		
		Artisans drowned, . . . . .	5,300	
		<b>Victims at Lyon, . . . . .</b>	<b>31,000</b>	
		<b>Total, . . . . .</b>	<b>1,022,251</b>	

In this enumeration are not comprehended the massacres at Versailles, at the Abbey, the Carmes, or other prisons on September 2, the victims of the Glacière of Avignon, those shot at Toulon and Marseilles, or the persons slain in the little town of Bedoin, of which the whole population perished. [Prudhomme, *Vict. de la Rev. Chateaub. Etud. Hist. Pr. 96, 97.*]

It is in an especial manner remarkable in this dismal catalogue, how large a proportion of the victims of the Revolution were persons in the middling and

lower ranks of life. The priests and nobles guillotined are only 2413, while the persons of plebeian origin exceed 13,000! The nobles and priests put to death at Nantes were only 2160; while the infants drowned and shot are 2000, the women 764, and the artisans 5300! So rapidly in revolutionary convulsions does the career of cruelty reach the lower orders, and so wide spread is the carnage dealt out to them, compared with that which they have sought to inflict on their superiors.

period. The active part of the bloody faction at Paris never exceeded a few hundred men; their talents were by no means of the highest order, nor their weight in society considerable; yet they trampled under foot all the influential classes, ruled mighty armies with absolute sway, kept 200,000 of their fellow-citizens in captivity, and daily led out several hundred persons, of the best blood in France, to execution. Such is the effect of the unity of action which atrocious wickedness produces; such the consequence of rousing the cupidity of the lower orders; such the ascendancy which in periods of anarchy is acquired by the most savage and lawless of the people. The peaceable and inoffensive citizens lived and wept in silence; terror crushed every attempt at combination; the extremity of grief subdued even the firmest hearts. In despair at effecting any change in the general sufferings, apathy universally prevailed, the people sought to bury their sorrows in the delirium of present enjoyments, and the theatres were never fuller than during the whole duration of the Reign of Terror (1). Ignorance of human nature can alone lead us to ascribe this to any peculiarity in the French character; the same effects have been observed in all parts and ages of the world, as invariably attending a state of extreme and long-continued distress.

How, then, did a faction, whose leaders were so extremely contemptible in point of numbers, obtain the power to rule France with such absolute sway? The answer is simple. It was by an expedient of the plainest kind, and by steadily following out one principle so obvious that few have sought for the cause of such terrible phenomena in its application. This was by promoting, and to a great extent actually giving, to the working-classes the influence and the possessions of all the other orders in the state. *Egestas cupida novarum rerum*, was the maxim on which they acted; it was to this point, the cupidity and ambition of those to whom fortune had proved adverse, that all their measures were directed. Their principle was to keep the revolutionary passions of the people constantly awake by the display of fresh objects of desire; to represent all the present misery which the system of innovation had occasioned, as the consequence of the resistance which the holders of property had opposed to its progress; and to dazzle the populace by the prospect of boundless felicity, when the revolutionary equality and spoliation for which they contended, was fully established. By this means, they effectually secured, over the greater part of France, the co-operation of the multitude; and it was by their physical strength, guided and called forth by the revolutionary clubs and committees universally established, and everywhere composed of the most ardent of the Jacobin faction, that their extraordinary power was supported. This system succeeded perfectly as long as the victims of spoliation were the higher orders and considerable holders of property; it was when they were exhausted, and the edge of the guillotine began to descend upon the shopkeepers and the more opulent of the labouring classes, that the *general* reaction took place which overturned the reign of terror. When society is in so corrupt and profligate a form, that a faction, qualified by their talents and energy to take the lead in public affairs, can be found who will carry on the government on their principles, and they are not crushed in the outset by an united effort of all the holders of property, it can hardly fail of obtaining temporary success. It is well that the friends of order of every political persuasion, and they are to be found as

(1) Louvet, 124, 125. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*.

much among the supporters of rational freedom as the advocates of monarchical power, should be aware of the deadly weapon which is in the possession of their adversaries, and the necessity of uniting to wrest it from their hands the moment that it is unsheathed : and it would be fortunate if the agents of revolution would contemplate, in the Reign of Terror and the fate of Robespierre, the necessary effects of using it to their country and themselves.

There is no character, however, which has not some redeeming points : pure unmixed wickedness is the creation of romance, but never yet appeared in real life. Even the Jacobins of Paris were not destitute of good qualities ; history would deviate equally from its first duty, and its chief usefulness, if it did not bring them prominently forward. With the exception of some atrocious characters, such as Collôt-d'Herbois, Fouché, Carrier, and a few others, who were almost entirely guided by base and selfish motives, they were in general men possessed of some qualities, in which the seeds of a noble character are to be found. In moral courage, energy of character, and decision of conduct, they yielded to none in ancient or modern times : their heroic resolution to maintain amidst unexampled perils, the independence of their country, was worthy of the best days of Roman patriotism. If this noble desire could be separated from the obvious necessity of repelling the Allies to avoid punishment for the numberless crimes which they had committed, it would be deserving of the highest admiration : mingled as it necessarily was in their case, with a large portion of that baser alloy, it is still a redeeming point in their character. Some of them, doubtless, were selfish or rapacious, and used their power for the purposes of individual lust, or private emolument ; but others, among whom we must number Robespierre and St.-Just, were entirely free from that degrading contamination, and in the atrocities they committed, were governed, if not by public principle, at least by private ambition. Even the blood which they shed was often the result, in their estimation, not so much of terror or danger as of overbearing necessity : they deemed it essential to the success of freedom ; and regarded the victims who perished under the guillotine, as the melancholy sacrifice which required to be laid on its altars. In arriving at this frightful conclusion, they were, doubtless, mainly influenced by the perils of their own situation ; they massacred others because they were conscious that death, if vanquished, justly awaited themselves, but still the weakness of humanity in their, as in many similar cases, deluded them by the magic of words, or the supposed influence of purer motives, and led them to commit the greatest crimes, while constantly professing the noblest intentions. There is nothing surprising or incredible in this : we have only to recollect, that all France joined in a crusade against the Albigeois, and that its bravest warriors deemed themselves secure from eternal, by consigning thousands of wretches to temporal flames : we have only to go back in imagination to Godfrey of Bouillon and the Christian warriors putting forty thousand unresisting citizens to death on the storming of Jerusalem, and wading to the Holy Sepulchre ankle-deep in human gore, to be convinced that such delusions are not peculiar to any particular age or country, but that they are the universal offspring of fanaticism, whether in political or religious contests. The writers who represent the Jacobins as mere blood-thirsty wretches, vultures, insatiate in their passion for destruction, are well-meaning and amiable, but weak and ignorant men ; unacquainted with the real working of delusion or wickedness in the human

heart, and calculated to mislead, rather than direct future ages on the approach of times similar to that in which they obtained their ascendancy. Vice never appears in such colours : it invariably conceals its real deformity. If other states are ever to be ruled by a Jacobin faction, the advent of their power will not be marked by sanguinary professions, or the hideous display of heartless atrocity (1); it will be ushered in by the warmest expressions of philanthropy, by boundless hopes of felicity, and professions of the utmost regard for the great principles of public justice and general happiness (2).

There is no opinion more frequently stated by the annalists and historians of the Revolution on the popular side in France, than that the march of the Revolution was inevitable : that an invincible fatality attends all such convulsions ; and that by no human exertions could its progress have been changed, or its horrors averted. The able works of Thiers, Mignet, and many others, are mainly directed to this end ; and it constitutes, in their estimation, the best apology of the Revolution. Never was an opinion more erroneous. There is nothing in the annals of human affairs which warrants the conclusion, that improvement necessarily leads to revolution ; and that in revolution, a succession of rulers, each more sanguinary and atrocious than the preceding, must be endured before the order of society is restored. It is not the career of reform, it is the career of guilt which leads to these consequences ; this deplorable succession took place in France, not because changes were made, but because boundless crimes in the course of these changes were committed. The partisans of liberal institutions have fallen into a capital error, when, in their anxiety to exculpate the actors in the Revolution, they have laid its horrors on the cause of the Revolution itself ; to do so, was to brand the cause of freedom with infamy, when it should have been confined to its wicked supporters. It was the early commission of crime by the leaders of the Revolution which precipitated and rendered irretrievable its subsequent scenes ; the career of passion in nations is precisely similar to its excesses

(1) *Levasseur de la Sarthe*, Vol. i. 24, 80. iii. 164, 226.

(2) The ablest and most interesting apology for the Jacobins is to be found in the *Memoirs of Levasseur de la Sarthe*, himself no inconsiderable actor in their sanguinary deeds. It is highly satisfactory to have such a work to do justice to their intentions : and it is a favourable symptom of the love of impartiality in the human heart that even Robespierre and St. Just have had their defenders. Napoléon was of opinion, that the character of the former of these men had been too severely handled by subsequent writers. "He was of opinion," says Las Cases, "that Robespierre had neither talent, nor force, nor system ; that he was the true emissary of the Revolution, who was sacrificed the moment that he strove to arrest it in its course : the fate of all those who before himself had engaged in the attempt, but that he was by no means the monster that was commonly believed." "Robespierre," said he, "was at last desirous to stop the public executions. He had not been at the Committees for six weeks before his fall ; and in his letters to his brother, who was attached to the army at Nice, which I myself saw, he deplored the atrocities which were going forward, and ruining the Revolution by the pity which they excited. Cambacérès, who is to be regarded as an authority for that epoch, said to me in relation to the condemnation of Robespierre : 'Sir, that was a case in which judgment was pronounced without hearing the accused.' You may add to that, that his intentions were dif-

ferent from what is generally supposed : He had a plan, after having overturned the furious factions whom he required to combat, to have returned to a system of order and moderation." "Some time before his fall," said Cambacérès, "he pronounced a discourse on that subject, full of the greatest beauties : it was not permitted to be inserted in the *Moniteur*, and all traces of it have, in consequence, been lost."—*Las Cases*, i. 366. *Levasseur de la Sarthe* also strenuously supports the same opinion : maintaining that Robespierre was cut off just at the moment when he was preparing a return to a system of humanity and beneficence.—*Levasseur*, iv. 110, 111. If this be true, it only augments the weight of the moral lesson to be derived from their history, that, even by such men, a return to order and justice was felt to be indispensable.

Whatever opinions may be entertained on this point, one thing seems very clear, that Robespierre's abilities were of the highest order, and that the contrary opinions expressed by so many of his contemporaries were suggested by envy or horror. It is impossible in any other way to account for his long dominion over France, at a period when talent of every sort was hurled forth in wild confusion to the great central arena at Paris. His speeches are a sufficient indication of the vigour of his mind ; they are distinguished in many instances by a nervous eloquence, a fearless energy, a simple and manly cast of thought, very different from most of the frothy declamations at the Tribune.



in individuals, and subject to the same moral laws. If we would seek the key to the frightful aberrations of the Revolution, we have only to turn to the exposition by the great English divines, of the career of guilty designs in the individual; the description of the one might pass for a faithful portrait of the other (1). There is a necessity to which both are subjected; but it is not a blind fatality or a necessary connection between change and convulsion, but the moral law of nature, that vice, whether in nations or private men, is made to work out its deserved punishment in the efforts which it makes for its own gratification.

The death of Hébert and the anarchists was that of guilty depravity; that of Robespierre and the Decemvirs, of sanguinary fanaticism; that of Danton and his confederates, of stoical infidelity; that of Madame Roland and the Girondists, of reckless ambition and deluded virtue; that of Louis and his family, of religious forgiveness. The moralist will contrast the different effects of virtue and wickedness in the last moments of life; the Christian will mark with thankfulness the superiority in the supreme hour, to the sublimest efforts of human virtue, which was evinced by the believers in his own faith.

(1) Take, for example, the following passage from Archbishop Tillotson:—"All vice stands upon a precipice; to engage in any sinful course is to run down the hill. If we once let loose the propensities of our nature, we cannot gather in the reins and govern them as we please; it is much easier not to begin a bad course, than to stop it when begun. 'Tis a good thing for a man to think to set bounds to himself in any thing that is bad; to resolve to sin in number, weight, and measure, with great temperance and discretion; that he will commit this sin, and then give over; entertain but this one temptation and after that, shut the door and admit no more. Our corrupt hearts, when they are once set in motion, are like the raging sea, to which we can set no bounds, nor say to it: Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther. Sin is very cunning and deceitful, and does strangely gain upon men when once they give way to it. It is of a very bewitching nature, and hath strange arts of address and insinuation. The giving way to a small sin does

marvellously prepare and dispose a man for a greater. By giving way to one little vice after another, the strongest resolution may be broken. 'Tis scarce imaginable of what force a single bad action is to produce more: for sin is very teeming and fruitful, and though there be no blessing annexed to it, yet it does strangely increase and multiply. As there is a connection of one virtue with another, so vices are linked together, and one sin draws many after it. When the devil tempts a man to commit any wickedness, he does, as it were, lay a long train of sins, and if the first temptation take, they give fire to another. Let us then resist the beginnings of sin: because we have then most power and sin least."—Tillotson, *Serm. x. Works. i. 91, fol. ed.*—This might stand for a graphic picture of the downward progress of the revolutionary passion in nations: philosophy will strive in vain to give so clear an elucidation of the causes which render it, when once thoroughly awakened, so destructive in its career.

## CHAPTER XV.

## INTERNAL STATE OF FRANCE DURING THE REIGN OF TERROR.

## ARGUMENT.

**Vast Exertions of the French Government during the Reign of Terror—Its enormous expenditure—Prodigious Issue of Assignats : its Effects—Their rapid Depreciation—Origin of the Law of the Maximum on Prices—Great increase of Disorders and Gambling from the rapid changes of Prices—Forced Requisitions of Grain, Horses, and Carriages—Public Robbery for support of Populace of Cities—The immense Burden it imposed on the State—Forced Loans from the Opulent Classes—Confusion of the old and Revolutionary Debt—Continued Fall of the Assignats—Severe Laws against Foresters and all Public Companies—Direful effects of these Laws—Excessive Violence of the People from the Rise of Prices—Renewed Measures of Severity by the Municipality—And of the Convention—Establishment of the Committee of Subsistence—Equalization of Weights and Measures, and Decimal Notation—Sunday abolished—The Decade Established—Absolute Powers of the Committee of Public Safety—Grinding oppression on the poor—Their Destitute and Deplorable Condition—People of Paris put on Reduced Rations—Fresh Arbitrary Taxation of the Opulent—Conversion of the Life into perpetual Annuitants—Reflections on the successive Destruction of all Classes by the Revolution—But it necessarily results from the Development of the Revolutionary Passion—Successive steps of its disastrous progress ; irresistible Power which made the one lead to the other—Great Effect of these Changes on the Distribution of the Landed Property of France—Its Effect on Population.**

THE internal and financial situation of France, during, and subsequent to the Reign of Terror, is equally instructive as to the inevitable consequence of revolutions, and the causes of the military events which subsequently occurred.

**Vast Exertions of the French Government during the Reign of Terror.**

Nothing could have enabled the French government to make head against the difficulties of their situation, and the formidable attack of the European powers in 1793, but the immense levy of 1,300,000 men which then took place, the confiscation of half the landed property in the kingdom, and the unbounded issue of assignats on the security of the national domains. These great measures, which no government could have attempted, but during the fervour of a revolution, mutually upheld each other; and perpetuated the revolutionary system by the important interests which were made to depend on its continuance. The immense levy of soldiers drew off almost all the ardent and energetic spirits, and not only furnished bread to the multitudes whom the closing of all pacific employments had deprived of subsistence, but let off in immense channels the inflamed and diseased blood of the nation; the confiscation of the land placed funds worth above L.700,000,000 sterling at the disposal of the government, which they were enabled to squander with boundless profusion in the maintenance of the revolutionary *régime* at home, and the contest with its enemies abroad; the extraordinary issue of paper to the amount ultimately of L.350,000,000, which always enabled the Treasury to liquidate its demands, and interested every holder of property in the kingdom in the support of the national domains, the only security on which it rested. During the unparalleled and almost demoniac energy produced by the sudden operation of these powerful causes, France was unconquerable; and it was their combined

operation which brought it triumphant through that violent and unprecedented crisis (1).

Its Enormous Expenditure. Europe has had too much reason to become acquainted with the military power developed by France during this eventful period; but the civil force, exerted by the dictators within their own dominions, though less generally known, was, perhaps, still more remarkable. Fifty thousand Revolutionary Committees were soon established in the republic, and embraced above 500,000 members, all the most resolute and determined of the Jacobin party. Each of these individuals received three francs a-day as his wages for seeking out victims for arrest and the scaffold; and their annual charge was 594,000,000 of francs, or L.24,000,000 sterling (2). Between the military defenders and civil servants of the government, almost all the active and resolute men in France were in the pay of the dictators; and the whole starving energy of the country fed on the spoils of its defenceless opulence;—a terrible system, drawing after it the total dissolution of society; capable of being executed only by the most audacious wickedness; but never likely when it is attempted, of failing for a time at least of success.

“When a native of Louisiana,” says Montesquieu, “wishes to obtain the fruit of a tree, he lays the axe to its root: behold the emblem of despotism!” He little imagined how soon his own country was to afford a signal example of this truth. This system of revolutionary activity and plunder, produced astonishing effects for a limited period, just as an individual who, in a few years, squanders a great fortune, outshines all those who live only on the fruits of their industry. But the inevitable period of weakness soon arrives; the maniac who exerts demoniac strength, cannot in the end withstand the steady efforts of intelligence; the career of extravagance is in general short; bankruptcy arrests alike the waste of improvidence, and the splendour which attends it.

Prodigious Issue of Assignats. Its Effects. Cambon, the minister of finance, soon after the fall of Robespierre, made an important and astonishing revelation of the length to which the emission of assignats had been carried under the Reign of Terror. The national expenses had exceeded three hundred millions of francs, or above L.12,000,000 a-month; the receipts of the treasury during the disorder which prevailed, never exceeded a fourth part of that sum; and there was no mode of supplying the deficiency but by an incessant issue of paper money. The quantity in circulation at the fall of Robespierre amounted to six milliards, four hundred millions,—about L.300,000,000 sterling; while the national domains were still worth twelve milliards, or above L.520,000,000 sterling (3). But this astonishing issue of paper could not continue, without introducing a total confusion of property of every sort. All the persons employed by government, both in the civil and military departments, were paid in the paper currency at par; but as it rapidly fell, from the enormous quantity in circulation, to a tenth part, and soon a twentieth of its real value, the pay received was merely nominal, and those in the receipt of the largest apparent incomes were in want of the common necessities of life. Pichegru, at the head of the army of the north, with a nominal pay of four thousand francs, was only in the actual receipt on the Rhine, in 1793, of two hundred francs, or L.8 sterling a-month in gold or silver; a smaller sum than

(1) Toul. v. 194. Th. vii. 239.

(2) Chateaub. *Érud. Hist.* Préface, 97, 98.

(3) Report of Cambon. Th. vii. 134.

is the pay of an English lieutenant: and Hoche, the commander of 100,000 men, the army of la Vendée, besought the government to send him a horse, as he was unable to purchase one, and the military requisitions had exhausted all those in the country where he commanded. If such was the condition of the superior, it may be imagined what was the situation of the inferior officers, and private soldiers; while in their own country they were literally starving; and the necessity of conquest was felt as strongly, to enable them to live (1) on the spoils of their enemies, as to avert the sword of desolation from the frontiers of France.

Their rapid Depreciation. This constant and increasing depreciation of the assignats produced its natural and unavoidable effect in a great enhancement of the price of provisions, and all the articles of human consumption. The assignats were not absorbed in the purchase of the national domains, because the holders were distrustful of the security of the revolutionary title, which they could alone receive, as their issue continued at the rate of L. 10,000,000 sterling a-month; of course the market became gorged, and the value of the assignats rapidly declined. Though this depreciation was unavoidable, the Convention endeavoured to arrest it, and enacted the punishment of six years of irons against any who should exchange any quantity of silver or gold for a greater nominal value of assignats; or should ask a larger price for any articles of merchandize, if the price was paid in paper, than if paid in the precious metals. It is needless to say that this forced attempt to sustain the value of the assignats was totally nugatory; and the consequences soon became fatal to many classes of persons. Debtors of every description hastened to discharge their obligations; and the creditors, compelled to accept paper at par, which was not worth a fifth or a tenth, at last not an hundredth, of its nominal value, were defrauded of the greater part of their property. The working classes, whose wages, in consequence of the general stagnation of industry, had by no means risen in proportion to this fall in the value of the assignats, found themselves miserably off for the necessaries of life; while the farmers, raising the price of their provisions, in proportion to the fall in the value of paper, soon elevated them beyond the reach of the labouring poor. This state of things, so opposite to what they had been led to expect as the result of a revolution, excited the most vehement discontent among the working classes; they ascribed it all, as is always the case, to the efforts of fore-stallers, and demanded with loud cries that they should be led out to the guillotine (2).

Origin of the Law of the Maximum on Prices. It became then absolutely necessary to have recourse to a *maximum*: powerful as the Committee of Public Safety was, a longer continuance of the public discontents would have endangered its existence. Corn was indeed not wanting, but the farmers, dreading the tumult and violence of the markets, and unwilling to part with their produce at the nominal value of the assignats, refused to bring it to the towns. To May 4, 1793. such a pitch did this evil arise in the beginning of May 1793, that the Convention were forced to issue a decree, compelling the farmers and grain-merchants to declare what stock they had in their possession, and to bring it to the public markets at a price fixed by each commune. Domiciliary visits were authorized, to inspect the stock of each holder of grain, and false returns punished by a forfeiture of the whole. In addition to this, the distri-

(1) Th. viii. 103, 115, 446.

(2) Th. v. 147, 149.

bution of bread by the bakers was provided for in the most minute manner; no one could obtain bread without producing a *carte de sûreté*, issued by the Revolutionary Committees; and on that *carte* was inscribed the number of his family, and the quantity to be delivered to each member. Finally, to put an end to the scandalous scenes which generally took place at the bakers' doors, it was enacted, that each bread shop should have a rope attached to it; each person, as he arrived, was obliged to take it in his hand, and remain quietly there till all before him were served. But in the struggles of discontent and famine, the cord was frequently broken; fierce conflicts ensued, and nothing but a prompt interposition of military force was able to restore tranquillity (1). To such minute and vexatious regulations are governments reduced when they once violate the freedom of human action; and to such a load of fetters do the people subject themselves when they abandon themselves to the insane passion for democratic power.

Great increase of Disorders and Gambling from the rapid change of Prices. All the other articles of life besides corn speedily rose with the increased issue of the assignats, and the people persisted in ascribing to forestallers the natural consequences of a depreciated circulation. Frightful tumults arose; the boats which descended the Seine with groceries, fruits, and wood, were seized and plundered; by the advice of Marat, they on one occasion rose and plundered all the confectioners' shops. Terrified at the continual recurrence of those disorders, the capitalists declined investing their money in purchases of any sort; and the shares in foreign mercantile companies rose rapidly from the increased demand for them, as the only investment affording a tolerable degree of security (2):—another striking proof of the consequences of the disorders consequent on popular ambition, and their tendency to turn from the people the reservoirs by which their industry is maintained.

During the perils and chances of a revolution, the tendency to gambling of every sort prodigiously increased. Men who had the sword of Damocles continually suspended over their heads, sought to make the most of the numerous chances of making money, which the rapid rise and fall of the assignats, and the boundless profusion of articles of luxury brought into the market by the ruin of their owners, naturally occasioned. The Bourse of Paris was crowded with bankers, revolutionists, ci-devant priests, ruined nobles, and adventurers of every description, who sometimes made enormous gains, and passed a life of debauchery with actresses, opera dancers, and abandoned women of every description, whom the dissolution of society had brought in contact with those who had risen for the moment on the wheel of fortune. Such was the universal dissolution of manners, arising from the dread of popular jealousy, that almost all the members of the Convention lived publicly with mistresses, who became possessed of much of the influence in the state. To have done otherwise would have exposed them to the blasting suspicion of their being Christians and Royalists (3).

Forced Requisitions. August 4, 1793. The forced requisitions of horses, ammunition, provisions, and stores of every sort from the people, soon proved the source of infinite and most vexatious burdens. In August 1793, eighteen commissioners were nominated by the Convention, with powers to require from the primary assemblies in every part of France, unlimited supplies of men,

(1) Th. v. 151.

(2) Th. v. 152, 156.

(3) Th. v. 161. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 81, 82.

horses, provisions, and ammunition. The principle founded on was, that the men and animals, indispensable for the purposes of agriculture, should alone be preserved, and that all the remainder might be seized for the purposes of the republic. All the horses of draught and burden, not absolutely required by the cultivators or manufacturers, were seized for the State; all the arms of every description, appropriated by the government Commissioners; the great hotels of the emigrants confiscated to the use of the State, converted into vast workshops for the manufacture of arms, clothing, or equipment for the armies, or magazines for the storing of subsistence for the use of the people. The principal manufactory of arms was established at Paris, and the whole workmen in iron and jewellery pressed into its service. It soon became capable of sending forth a thousand muskets a-day. To such a length did the dictators carry their principle of managing every thing of their own authority, that they compelled a return of the whole subsistence in every part of the country, and endeavoured to purchase it all, and distribute it either to the armies, or at a low price to the imperious citizens of the towns (1).

This system of forced requisitions gave the government the command of a large proportion of the agricultural produce of the kingdom, and it was enforced with merciless severity. Not only grain, but horses, carriages, Of Grain, Horses, and Carriages. and conveyances of every sort, were forcibly taken from the cultivators; and as the payment they received was merely in assignats, it in truth amounted to nothing. These exactions excited the most violent discontent, but no one ventured to give it vent; to have expressed dissatisfaction, would immediately have led to a denunciation at the nearest Revolutionary Committee, and put the complainer in imminent hazard of his life. To complete the burden, the democratic power, incessant clamour, and destitute situation of the people in the great towns, rendered it indispensable to adopt some general measures for their relief; and the only method which was found effectual, was to put the great cities on the same footing with the armies, and give the agents of government the right of making forced requisitions for their support (2).

Public robbery for support of populace of cities. The maintenance of such immense bodies of men soon came to be of itself equal to the whole administration of an ordinary government. A board was appointed of five directors, who soon had ten thousand persons in their daily pay, incessantly occupied in enforcing these requisitions for the support of the great cities. That of Paris was of itself an army. No less than 636,000 persons daily received rations at the public offices, amounting to eighteen hundred and ninety-seven sacks of meal; and the attention of government was incessantly directed towards keeping the citizens in good humour by regularity in their distribution. The losses sustained by the agriculturists in providing for this daily consumption were enormous; the cost of producing their grain had augmented tenfold by the depreciation of paper, and yet they were only paid the former price by the requisitionists. The farmers were obliged to pay ten francs a-day to their labourers instead of one franc, as in 1790, and every thing else in the same proportion; yet they were compelled to part with their grain, at the price fixed by the *maximum*, to the imperious and needy multitudes in the towns. In other words, nine-tenths of the subsistence daily consumed in Paris was

(1) Th. v. 183, 188. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 237, 245.

(2) Th. vii. 41.

extorted *without payment* from the cultivators in the country, and the cries of the sufferers stifled by the prospect of the guillotine; a striking instance of the grinding oppression exercised even over their own class by the sovereign multitude when they once obtain the ascendancy, and the state of subjection to which, in the progress of revolutions, the inhabitants of the country invariably fall to the citizens of towns (1).

The immense burden it entailed on the State. The necessity of feeding the sovereign multitude entailed other expenses of a more serious kind on the Convention, and constituted a large part of their never-ending financial embarrassments. Government bought grain from foreigners for twenty-one francs the quintal, and retailed it to the populace for fourteen; the cessation of agricultural labour in a great part of the country rendered it indispensable to carry on this ruinous commerce to a great extent, and the losses thence accruing to the state were stated by Cambon as enormous. The expence of feeding the inhabitants of Paris soon became almost as great as maintaining its fourteen armies. The Convention introduced the ruinous system of distributing every day, to every citizen of Paris, a pound of bread a-day, at the price of three sous in assignats; a burden which, from the fall in the value of paper, soon became almost as great as that of supporting them altogether (2).

Forced loans from the opulent classes. At the commencement of the Reign of Terror, the government adopted the plan of a forced loan from the opulent classes. This tax was imposed on an ascending scale, increasing according to the fortunes of the individuals; and out of an income of 50,000 francs, or about L.2000 a-year, they took, in 1792, 36,000 francs, or about L.1600. This immense burden was calculated as likely to produce at once a milliard of francs, or L.40,000,000 sterling, and as a security for this advance, the persons taxed received assignats, or were inscribed as public creditors on the *Grand-Livre* of the French funds; a security, in either case, depending entirely on the success of the Revolution, and which proved in the end almost elusory (3).

Confusion of the Old and Revolution-ary Debt. The public creditors of every description continued to be paid in assignats at par, notwithstanding their having fallen to a tenth of their nominal value; in other words, they received only a tenth part of what was really due to them. To perpetuate still farther the dependence of the public creditors of every description on the fortunes of the Revolution, the plan was projected by Cambon, and adopted by the Convention, of compelling all holders of stock to surrender to government their titles to it, and in lieu of every other written right, they were merely inscribed on the *Grand-Livre* of the French debt; and an extract of that inscription constituted thereafter the sole title of the proprietor. Most severe laws were enacted to compel the surrender of the older titles to the stock, which were immediately burned, and if a year elapsed, without this being done, the capital was forfeited. All the capital sums owing by the state were converted into perpetual annuities, at the rate of five per cent. so that a stock of 1000 francs was inscribed in the book for a perpetual annuity of 50 francs, and government for ever relieved of the burden of discharging the principal sums. "In this manner," said Cambon, "the debt contracted by despotism becomes indistinguishable from that contracted since the Revolution; and I defy despotic power, should it ever revive, to distinguish its ancient creditors from those

(1) Th. vii. 233, 237. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 180, 240.

(2) Th. vii. 137. Lac. xiii. 42.

(3) Hist. de la Conv. iii. 250, 300. Th. vii. 203.

of the new *régime*. As soon as this operation is completed, you will see the capitalist who now desires the restoration of a King, because he has a King for a debtor, and who fears that he will lose his fortune if he is not reestablished, desire equally vehemently the preservation of the Republic, when his private interests are irrecoverably wound up in its preservation (1).<sup>1</sup> The whole creditors, both Royal and Republican, were paid only in assignats, which progressively fell to a fifth, a tenth, a hundredth, and at last, in 1797, to a two hundred and fiftieth part of their nominal value; so that in the space of a few years the payment was entirely elusory, and a national bankruptcy had in fact existed many years before it was formally declared by the Directory.

Continued  
Fall of the  
Assignats.

All the measures of government, how vigorous and despotic soever, proved inadequate to sustain the falling value of the assignats, or keep down the price of provisions, or articles of daily consumption. To effect the object, they had recourse to new and still more oppressive regulations. To destroy the competition of rival companies, which prevented the direction of capital towards the purchase of the national domains, they abolished, by decree, all life insurance societies, and all companies of every description, of which the shares were transferable from hand to hand; they declared traitors to their country all those who placed their funds in any investments in countries with which the Republic was at war; and condemned to twenty years of irons every person convicted of refusing payment of any debt in assignats, or entering into any transaction in which they were received at less than their nominal value. They ordered that the bells of the churches should every where be melted down into sous pieces, to answer the immediate wants of the peasantry; and passed a decree, which ranked

Severe Laws  
against  
Foresters  
and all Pub-  
lic Compa-  
nies.

forestalling with capital crimes, and punished it with death. By this last law, it was declared that every one was to be considered as a forestaller, who withdrew from circulation merchandise of primary necessity, without immediately exposing them to public sale. The articles declared to be of primary necessity, were bread, wine, butcher-meat, grain, oats, vegetables, fruits, coal, wood, butter, cheese, linen, cotton stuffs, and dress of every description except silks. To carry into execution this iniquitous decree, the most inquisitorial powers were conferred on the Commissaries named by the Commune. Every merchant was obliged, at their summons, to give a statement of the goods contained in his warehouses; these declarations were liable to be checked at any hour by domiciliary visits; and any fraud or concealment was declared punishable with death. Commissioners, appointed by the Communes, were authorized to fix the price at which all these articles were to be sold; and if the necessary cost of the manufacture was such as to render the price beyond the reach of the people, they were still to be exposed to sale, at such a reduced price as might bring them within their means (2).<sup>2</sup> An atrocious edict, pressing with unparalleled severity upon the industrious classes, merely to gratify the needy and clamorous multitude on whom the government depended, and which, if it had subsisted long in force, would have destroyed all the industry of France, and handed over the people to the unmitigated horrors of actual famine.

(1) Th. v. 147, 191, 193. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 290—319.

(2) Th. v. 204—207.



**Direful  
Effects of  
these Laws.** These extravagant measures had not been many months in operation, before they produced the most disastrous effects. A great proportion of the shops in Paris, and all the principal towns, were shut; business of every sort was at a stand; the laws of the *maximum*, and against forestallers, had spread terror and distrust as much among the middling classes, who had commenced the Revolution, as the guillotine had among nobles and priests, who had been its earliest victims. The retail dealers, who had purchased their stock from the wholesale merchants before the *maximum*, and at a price higher than that allowed by the new Tariff, were compelled, by the terror of death, to sell at a loss to themselves, and saw their fortunes gradually melting away in their daily transactions. Even those who had laid in their stock after the imposition of the *maximum*, were in no better situation, for that regulation had only fixed their price when retailed to the public; but as it had not fixed the price at which the previous manufacture was to be accomplished, nor the necessary transport and storing it in their warehouses effected, and as their operations were necessarily paid in proportion to the depreciated value of the currency, the subsequent sale at the prices fixed by the *maximum* entailed ruinous losses on the tradesmen. The consequence was, that the greater part of the shops were everywhere closed; and those who continued to do business, did so only by fraud; the worst articles alone exposed to public sale at the legal price, and the best reserved for those who were willing in secret to pay their real value (1).

**Excessive  
violence of  
the People  
from the  
rise of  
Prices.** The people, who perceived these frauds, and witnessed the closing of so great a number of shops, were transported with fury, and besieged the Convention with the most violent petitions, insisting that the dealers should be compelled to reopen their shops, and continue to sell as usual, in spite of any loss they might sustain. They denounced the butchers, who were accused of selling unwholesome meat; the bakers, who furnished coarse bread for the poor, and fine for the rich; the wine-merchants, who diluted their liquors by the most noxious drugs; the salt merchants, the grocers, the confectioners, who conspired together to adulterate the articles in which they dealt in a thousand different ways. Chaumette, the Procureur-Général, supported their demands in a violent speech. "We sympathize," said he, "with the evils of the people, because we are the people ourselves; the whole council is composed of Sans-Culottes; it is the sovereign multitude. We care not though our heads fall, provided posterity will deign to collect our skulls. It is not the Gospel which I invoke, it is Plato. He that strikes with the sword, should be struck with the sword; he that strikes with poison should be struck with poison; he that famishes the people should die of famine. If subsistence and articles of merchandise are wanting, from whom shall the people seize them? From the Convention? Oct. 14, 1793. No. From the constituted authorities? No. They will take them from the shopkeepers and merchants. It is arms, and not gold, which is wanted to set in motion our manufactories; the world must know that the giant people can crush all its mercantile speculations. Rousseau has said, when the people have nothing to eat, they will eat the rich (2).

**Renewed  
Measures of  
Severity by  
the Municipality;** Intimidated by such formidable petitioners, the Assembly and the Municipality adopted still more rigorous measures. Hitherto they had only fixed the price of articles of necessity in a manufactured

(1) Th. v. 399, 400.

(2) Th. v. 403. Hist. de la Conv. iii. 400, 437.

state, now they resolved to fix the price of the raw material; and the idea was even entertained of seizing the material and the workmen alike for the service of the state, and converting all France into one vast manufactory in the employment of government. The Communes declared that every merchant who had been engaged in business for above a year, who either abandoned or diminished it, should be sent to prison as a suspected person; the prices which the merchant could exact from the retailer, and the retailer from the customer, were minutely fixed; the Revolutionary Committees were alone permitted to issue tickets, authorizing purchases of any sort; one species of bread, of coarse quality, was only allowed to be baked; and to prevent the scandalous scenes which daily occurred at the bakers' shops, where a number of the poor passed a part of the night with the cord in their hands, it was enacted that the distribution should commence with the last arrived; a regulation which only changed the direction of the tumult. These regulations were speedily adopted from the Municipality of Paris over all France (1).

And of the Convention. The Convention adopted the still more hazardous step of fixing the prime cost of all articles of rude produce. The price was fixed on the basis of the prices of 1790, augmented by certain fixed rates for the profit of the different hands through which they passed, before reaching the consumer. To carry into execution the numerous regulations on this subject, Establishment of the Committee of Subsistence. a commission of subsistence and provisioning was appointed, with absolute powers, extending over all France; it was charged with the execution of the tariffs, with the superintendence of the conduct of the municipalities in that particular; with continually receiving statements of the quantity of subsistence in the country, and the places where it existed; with transporting it from one quarter to another, and providing for the subsistence of the armies, and the furnishing them with the means of transport (2).

Equalization of Weights and Measures, and Decimal Notation. Speculation of every sort, even the gambling of the Bourse, was towards the close of the Reign of Terror almost destroyed. The bankers and merchants, accused on all sides of elevating prices, and seeing some of their number daily led out to the scaffold, deserted the exchange, and sought for an asylum in the solitude of their homes. The company of the Indies, the last existing mercantile establishment, was abolished (3); government resolved to have no investment for capital but the purchase of the national domains (4).

(1) Th. v. 404, 405.

(2) Th. v. 405, 406.

(3) Th. v. 409, 410.

(4) The preceding details, all taken from the Republican writers of France, demonstrate that the picture drawn by a contemporary writer was not overcharged; and that the genius of Mr. Burke had justly discerned, through the fumes of democracy, the galling bondage it was inflicting on mankind. "The state of France," says he, "is perfectly simple. It consists of but two descriptions; the oppressors and the oppressed.

"The first has the whole authority of the state in their hands; all the arms, all the revenues of the public, all the confiscations of individuals and corporations. They have taken the lower sort from their occupations, and have put them into pay, that they may form them into a body of Janissaries to over-rule and awe property. The heads of these wretches they never suffered to cool. They supply

them with a food for fury varied by the day, besides the sensual state of intoxication from which they are rarely free. They have made the priests and people formally abjure the Divinity; they have estranged them from every civil, moral, and social, or even natural and instinctive sentiment, habit, and practice, and have rendered them systematically savages, to make it impossible for them to be the instruments of any sober and virtuous arrangement, or to be reconciled to any state of order, under any name whatsoever.

"The other description—the oppressed—are people of some property; they are the small relics of the persecuted landed interest; they are the burghers and the farmers. By the very circumstance of their being of some property, though numerous in some points of view, they cannot be very considerable as a number. In cities, the nature of their occupations renders them domestic and feeble; in the country, it confines them to their

Grinding  
Oppression  
on the  
Poor.

Nor was it only on the opulent classes that the revolutionary enactments pressed with severity; they were equally oppressive to the poorest. Never, in truth, were the labouring poor subjected to so many and such vexatious restraints, or obedience to them enforced by such numerous and sanguinary punishments. No one ventured to indulge in any luxury, or abandon himself to any gratification, metallic currency had almost disappeared, and the poor received their wages merely in paper currency, with which they were unable to purchase the necessaries of life. If they were shopkeepers, they were compelled to sell at a fictitious price; if they were purchasers, they were under the necessity of buying the most wretched articles, because the best were withdrawn by the effect of the forced sales enjoined by government. Only one kind of bread, of the blackest and coarsest kind, was to be had, and that could be obtained in no other way but by receiving tickets from the Revolutionary Committees, by waiting half the night, or for hours during the day, at the doors of the bakers, with a rope in their hands. The names of the weights and measures, of the days and months, were changed; the labouring poor had only three Sundays in the month instead of four; the consolations of religion, the worship of the Deity, were at an end (1).

Their desti-  
tute and de-  
plorable  
condition.

All the efforts of the Committee of Public Safety, after some time, became insufficient to procure an adequate supply of subsistence. Commerce escaped the ruinous law of the *maximum*, and it escaped it in the most disastrous of all ways, by a total cessation. Want of the severest kind was experienced in every branch of human consumption; the ordinary supplies of butcher-meat failed, and as it could still be publicly sold only at the *maximum*, the butchers exposed only the most unwholesome kind of food, and reserved that of the better sort for clandestine sale. The evil soon extended to other articles; vegetables, fruits, eggs, butter, and fish, disappeared from the markets. Bands of persons travelled far on the high-roads, and met them as they were approaching Paris, where they were clandestinely purchased at prices far above the *maximum*, for the use of the opulent classes. The people were animated with the most violent indignation at these practices, and, to put a stop to them, the Commune enacted that no butchers should be permitted to go out to meet the cattle on their way to the markets; that no meat should be bought or sold but at the established stalls; and that no crowd should be allowed to collect round the butchers' doors before six

farm for subsistence. The National Guards are all chapped and reformed. Every thing suspicious in the description of which they were composed is rigorously disarmed. Committees, called of vigilance and safety, are every where formed; a most severe and scrutinising inquisition, far more rigid than any thing ever known or imagined. Two persons cannot meet and confer without hazard to their liberty, and even to their lives. Numbers scarcely credible have been executed, and their property confiscated. At Paris, and in most other towns, the bread they buy is a daily dole, which they cannot obtain without a daily ticket delivered to them by their masters. Multitudes of all ages and sexes are actually imprisoned. I have reason to believe, that in France there are not, for various state crimes, so few as twenty thousand actually in jail—a large proportion of people of property in any state. If a father of a family should show any disposition to resist, or to withdraw himself from

their power, his wife and children are cruelly to answer for it. It is by means of these hostages that they keep the troops, which they force by masses (as they call it) into the field—true to their colours.

“Another of their resources is not to be forgotten. They have lately found a way of giving a sort of ubiquity to the supreme sovereign authority, which no monarch has been able yet to give to any representation of his.

“The Commissioners of the National Convention, who are the Members of the Convention itself, and really exercise all its powers, make continual circuits through every province, and visits to every army. There they supersede all the ordinary authorities, civil and military, and change and alter every thing at their pleasure. So that, in effect, no deliberative capacity exists in any portion of the inhabitants.”—Burke on the Policy of the Allies. Works, vii. 135.

(1) Th. v. 435.

in the morning, instead of three, the time when they usually began to assemble. These regulations, like all the others, failed of effect; the crowds were just as great and as clamorous round the butchers' shops as before; violent tumults constantly arose among those who had got possession of the ropes at their doors; and, as a last resource, the government was preparing to lay out the gardens of the Tuileries, of the Luxembourg, and of all the opulent persons round Paris, in the cultivation of garden stuffs (1).

People of  
Paris put  
on reduced  
Rations.

At length the evils arising from the *maximum* became so excessive, that the inhabitants of Paris were obliged to be put on an allowance of animal food. The commission for provisions fixed the daily consumption at 75 oxen, 150 quintals of mutton and veal, and 200 hogs. All the animals intended for the consumption of the metropolis were brought to a public market-place, where alone meat was allowed to be sold; and the butchers were only allowed to deliver every five days half a pound of meat to each family for each head. The same *cartes de sûreté* were issued by the Revolutionary Committees for this scanty aid, as for the rations of bread. Shortly after, the supply of wood and charcoal was found to fail, and laws were passed, preventing any one from having in store more than a very limited quantity of these necessary articles. As the embarrassment of the finances continued to be excessive, notwithstanding the issue of another milliard, or L.40,000,000 in assignats, recourse was had to a new forced exaction from the rich. This consisted of 100,000,000 francs, or L.4,000,000, which was levied upon them without any obligation of reimbursement, even in the depreciated paper of the Republic (2).

Fresh Arbitrary Taxation of the Opulent.

To complete the dependence of the debt on the Revolutionary government, Cambon carried into effect, during the Reign of Terror, a project for the conversion of the numerous class of life-annuitants, who were public creditors, into holders of a perpetual annuity. To accomplish this object, a scale was adopted, by which, to the older class of small life annuitants under L.80, and above forty years of age, the annual income was preserved, and the conversion only enforced against the excess of their annuity above this sum. This modification of the law was some relief to the most indigent class of the state annuitants; but still the conversion itself was a very great hardship to a numerous class of persons who had sunk a small capital, in order to procure a high interest during the remainder of their life, as they found themselves suddenly reduced to a half, and in many cases to a fourth, of their former income; and so numerous was this class of life-annuitants in France, and so tenacious are men of whatever touches their pecuniary interests, in preference to every other consideration, that there was no measure at the time which excited such violent discontent: and the Convention were more blamed for this retrenchment, than for all the sanguinary and terrible laws which had signalized their administration (3).

Such was the state of the internal changes on property produced by the Revolution, when the overthrow of Robespierre arrested its course. Never before, since the beginning of the world, had so great an experiment been made, and never had the disastrous consequences of giving the reins to popular ambition been so fully exemplified. Begun to avert the evils of na-

(1) Th. vi. 146, 151.

(2) Th. vi. 310, 314.

(3) Th. vi. 315, 316.

tional bankruptcy, instituted to preserve the public credit, it terminated in the most unheard-of disasters. It received at first the unanimous support of the whole French nation; in its progress it destroyed all those whose early aid had contributed to its advancement. The King supported it and perished; the nobles supported it and perished; the clergy supported it and perished; the merchants supported it and perished; the public creditors supported it and perished; the shopkeepers supported it and perished; the artisans supported it and perished; the peasants supported it and perished. The nobles, whose passion for innovation and misguided declamations in favour of equality, had first led to the convocation of the States-General, who early set the example of submission to the popular will, and voluntarily abdicated their titles, their privileges, and their rights, to place themselves at the head of the movement, were the first to be destroyed. Decimated by the guillotine, exiles from their country, destitute wanderers in foreign lands, they beheld their estates confiscated, their palaces sold, their children proscribed, themselves undone. While by the waters of Babylon they sat down and wept, they learned to lament the fatal precipitance with which they had excited the ambition of their inferiors, by yielding so precipitately to the public frenzy in favour of democracy. The clergy, who had proved themselves the earliest and steadiest friends of freedom, whose junction with the Tiers-État in the hour of peril had first given them a superiority over the privileged classes, and compelled the ruinous union of all the orders in one Chamber, were utterly destroyed by the party whom they had cherished: their religion was abolished, their churches closed, their property confiscated, themselves subjected to cruel and tyrannical enactments, compelled to wander in utter destitution in foreign lands, or purchase a miserable pittance by violating their oaths, and earning the contempt of all the faithful among their flocks. The commercial classes, whose jealousy of the unjust privileges of the noblesse had first fostered the flame of liberty, were consumed in the conflagration which it had raised; the once flourishing colonies of the monarchy were in flames, its manufacturing cities in ruins, its public wealth destroyed, its sails banished from the ocean, its naval establishments in decay. Blasted by a ruinous system of paper currency, and crushed in the grasp of a relentless despotism, manufacturing industry was withered, and commercial capital annihilated. The public creditors, once so loud in their praises of the first movements of the Revolution, whose enthusiasm had raised the public funds thirty per cent. in one day, when Necker was restored to power, in 1788, on the shoulders of the democracy, were now crushed beneath its wheels; the once opulent capitalists, ruined by the fall of the public securities, deprived of their property by a fictitious paper, paid by their debtors in a nominal currency, had long since sunk to the dust; while the miserable *rentiers* cheated out of almost all their income by the payment of their annuities in assignats, were wandering about in utter despair, supporting a miserable existence by charity, or terminating it by acts of suicide. The shopkeepers, whose unanimous shouts had so long supported the Constituent Assembly, whose bayonets had first upheld the fortunes of the Revolution, at last tasted its bitter fruits; as its movement advanced, and they became the objects of jealousy to still lower ambition, the fury of plebeian revenge was directed against their ranks; insensibly they melted away under the axe of the guillotine, or were destroyed by the law of

Reflections on  
the successive  
destruction of  
all classes  
by the Re-  
volution.

the *maximum*, and lamented with unavailing tears the convulsions which had deprived them at once of the purchasers of their commodities, the security for their property, and the free disposal of their industry. The artisans, who had expected a flood of prosperity from the regeneration of society, whose pikes had so often, at Jacobin command, issued from the Faubourgs to overawe the legislature, were speedily steeped in misery from the consequences of their actions; impatient of restraint, unable to endure a superior, they were at last subjected to the most galling bondage; destitute of employment, fed only by the bounty of government, they were fettered in every action of their lives; debarred the power of purchasing even the necessities of life for themselves, they were forced first to wait half the day as needy suppliants at the offices of the committees who issued their tickets, and then to watch half the night round the bakers' shops to procure the wretched pittance of a pound of black bread a-day for each member of their families. The peasants expected an immediate deliverance from tithes, taxes, and burdens of every description, from the consequences of their emancipation, and they found themselves ground down by the law of the *maximum*, forced to sell at nominal prices to the purveyors for the armies, and fettered in every action of their lives by oppressive regulations; they saw their sons perish in the field, or rot in the hospitals, their horses and cattle seized for the forced requisitions, and the produce of their labour torn from them by battalions of armed men, to maintain an indigent and worthless rabble in the great cities of the Republic.

But it necessarily results from the Development of the Revolutionary Passion.

Consequences so extraordinary, so unlooked for to every class of society from the throne to the cottage, are singularly instructive as to the consequences of revolutions. But yet, if the matter be considered dispassionately, it is evident that they must in every age attend any considerable convulsion in society. When a tree is felled, it is the leaves and the extremities which first begin to wither, because they are soonest affected by a stoppage in the supplies by which the whole is nourished; it is the same with society. Upon the occurrence of a revolution, the working classes are the first to suffer, because they have no stock to maintain themselves during a period of adversity, and being wholly dependent on the daily wages of labour, are the earliest victims of the catastrophe which has interrupted them.

It is this immediate effect of a revolution in spreading misery through the working classes, which in the general case renders its march irresistible, when not arrested in the outset by a firm combination of all the holders of property, and precipitates society into a series of convulsions from which it can hardly emerge without the destruction of the existing generation. The shock given to credit, the stoppage to speculation, the contraction to expenditure, is so excessive, that the lower orders are immediately involved in distress; and the same causes which increase their discontent, and augment their disposition to revolt, disable government, by the rapid fall of the revenue, either from administering relief or exerting force. The consequence is, that fresh insurrections take place; more extravagant and levelling doctrines become popular; a lower but more energetic class rises to the head of affairs; desperate measures of finance are adopted, the public expenditure is increased, while the national income is diminished; and after a succession of vain attempts to avoid the catastrophe, national bankruptcy takes place, and

the accumulations of ages are swept off in a general, public, and private insolvency.

Successive steps of its disastrous progress. The different steps of this disastrous but unavoidable progress are clearly marked in the successive stages of the French Revolution. Within six months after the Revolution broke out, it was discovered that the revenue had fallen, in consequence of the general uncertainty of the future, from L.24,000,000 a-year to L.17,000,000 and that at the very time when the embarrassment of the finances had been the principal cause of the convocation of the States-General. No resource could be found to meet the pressing difficulties of the Exchequer, but the confiscation of the property of the church, and subsequently that of the emigrant nobles. These measures again engendered evils which tended to perpetuate the difficulties from which they sprung; the confiscation of the church property rendered necessary the laws against the refractory priests, and thereby lighted the flames of civil war in la Vendée; while the severe enactments against the emigrant nobles produced a war of life and death with the aristocratic monarchs in Europe. Irrresistible power which made the one lead to the other. Pressed by civil war within, and the forces of Europe without, the Convention found themselves compelled to have recourse to the system of assignats, and carried on the enormous expenditure of a hundred and seventy millions sterling a-year, by dispensing with a prodigal hand the confiscated wealth of more than half of France. This prodigious issue of paper necessarily led to its rapid depreciation; all obligations of debt and credit were overturned by the necessity of accepting payment in a nominal currency; the rapid rise of the price of provisions compelled the government to adopt a *maximum*, and interfere with the arm of force in the care of public subsistence. Thence the forced requisitions, the compulsory sales, the distribution of rations, and all the innumerable tyrannical regulations which fettered industry in every department; and, at length, by exciting the passions of the people against each other, brought down even to the humblest class the horrors which they had originally inflicted on their superiors.

Such a survey of the consequence of human violence, both vindicates the justice of Providence, by demonstrating how rapidly and unavoidably the guilt of every class in society brings upon itself its own punishment, and tends to make us judge charitably of the conduct of men placed in such a terrible crisis of society. Harshly as we may think of the atrocities of the Revolution, let no man be sure, that, placed in similar circumstances, he would not have been betrayed into the same excesses. It is the insensible gradation in violence, the experienced necessity of advancing with the tide, which renders such convulsions so perilous to the morals as well as the welfare of nations. The authors of many of the worst measures in the Revolution were restored to private life, as innocent and inoffensive as other men; the most atrocious violations of right had been so long foreseen and discussed, that their occurrence produced little or no sensation. "Of all the lessons derived from the history of human passion," says Lavalette, "the most important is the utter impossibility which the best men will always experience of stopping, if they are once led into the path of error. If, a few years before they were perpetrated, the crimes of the Revolution could have been portrayed to those who afterwards committed them, even Robespierre himself would have recoiled with horror. Men are seduced, in the first instance, by plausible theories; their heated imaginations represent them as beneficial and easy of execution; they advance unconsciously from errors to faults, and from faults

to crimes, till sensibility is destroyed by the spectacle of guilt, and the most savage atrocities are dignified by the name of state policy (1)." Such always will be the case; it is the pressure of external circumstances which ultimately produces guilt, as much as guilt which at first induces the difficulties of public affairs. The leaders of a revolution are constantly advancing before the fire which they themselves have lighted; the moment they stop, they are consumed in the flames.

The progressive destruction of all classes during those melancholy years, and the successive elevation of one faction more guilty and extravagant than another to the head of affairs, has given rise to a general opinion among the French Republican writers, that there is a fatality in the march of revolutions, and that an invincible necessity drives the actors in those tempestuous scenes into deeds of bloodshed and cruelty. In truth, there is a necessity under which they act; but it is not the blind impulse of fatality, but the moral law of Nature, destined to provide for the expulsion from society of passions inconsistent with its existence. Experience in every age has abundantly proved, that the fervour of democracy is fatal to the best interests of mankind, and rapidly leads to the greatest miseries to all classes, because it subjects society to the guidance of those who are least qualified to direct it; but yet that it is of all passions the most difficult to eradicate from the human heart, and that when once it is generally diffused, whole generations of political fanatics must be destroyed before it can be reduced to a degree consistent with the existence of order. Ages might elapse, during the contest with this devouring principle, were it not that in its very nature it involves the causes of its speedy destruction. The successive ambition and passions of the different bodies who rise to eminence, soon occasion that frightful effusion of blood, or those wild and anarchical measures which, by involving whole classes in destruction, necessarily lead, though by a painful process, to a restoration of the natural order of society. This is the great moral to be derived from the history of the French Revolution; this it is which in every age has made democratic madness terminate in military despotism. In nations, as well as individuals, Providence has a sure method of dealing with the passions and sins of men, which is to leave them to the consequences of their own extravagance.

Even under circumstances, however, in appearance the most adverse, the laws of Nature provide an antidote to the greatest evils which afflict society. The march of democracy, though not prevented by the wisdom of man, is speedily stopt by the laws of Nature. The people in the end learn from their own suffering, if they will not from the experience of others, that the gift of unbounded political power is fatal to those who receive it; that despotism may flow from the workshop of the artisan, as well as the palace of the sovereign; and that those who, yielding to the wiles of the tempter, will eat of the forbidden fruit, must be driven from the joys of Paradise, to wander in the suffering of a guilty world. Genius, long a stranger to the cause of order, resumes its place by her side; she gives to a suffering, what she refused to a ruling cause. The indignation of virtue, the satire of talent, comes to be bestowed on the panders to popular gratification; the sycophancy of journals, the baseness of the press, the tyranny of the mob, employs the pencil of the Tacitus who portrays the decline and fall of the nation

(1) Lavalette, l. 178.



which has been torn by such convulsions. It is this reaction of Genius against Violence which steadies the march of human events, and renders the miseries of one age the source of elevation and instruction to those which are to succeed it; and whatever may be the temporary ascendancy of violence or anarchy, there can be but one opinion as to the final tendency of such changes to mankind, how fatal soever they may be to the people among whom they arise; we can discern the rainbow of peace, though not ourselves destined to reach the ark of salvation; and look forward with confidence to the future improvement of the species, from amidst the storm which is to subvert the Monarchies of Europe.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1794.

## ARGUMENT.

**Military strength and naval weakness of France, in consequence of the Revolution—State of the respective Navies of the two Powers—Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—Treason Trials in England and Scotland—Supplies voted for the year 1794, and Forces put on foot by Great-Britain—British Conquests in the West Indies, and in the Mediterranean—Great naval Victory on 1st June, by Lord Howe—Tactics by which the Victory was gained—Its great moral effect in England—Vast military Preparations of France—Talent with which it was wielded—Forces of the Allies, and of the French—Plan of Allied Campaign—Landrecies taken—Ineffectual efforts of the Republicans to raise the Siege—Defeat of Clairfait—Jourdan ordered up from the Rhine to the Sambre with forty-five thousand men—Various indecisive Actions on the Sambre—French at length driven over the River—Battle of Turcoing—Pichegru takes the command in West Flanders—French indecisive Actions—The French again cross the Sambre; invest Charleroi, and are driven across the River again—Arrival of Jourdan with forty thousand Men—Sambre again crossed, and Charleroi reinvested—Separation of the Austrians and English—Pichegru attacks Clairfait—Imperialists assemble to succour Charleroi—Battle of Fleurus—Allies, though not defeated, retreat—Pichegru drives back Clairfait in West Flanders—Jourdan and Pichegru unite at Brussels—English retreat towards Holland—Inactivity of the French—Decree of the Convention to give no quarter: is not executed by the Generals—Noble Proclamation by the Duke of York—Operations on the Rhine—Inactivity of the Prussians—Operations in Piedmont—Mont-Cenis is carried by the French—Great successes of Napoléon and Massena in the Maritime Alps—The Piedmontese are driven over the ridge of the Alps—War in the Eastern Pyrenees—Great difficulties of the Spaniards—They are totally defeated in their Lines by the French—Collioure taken—Invasion of Spain by the Western Pyrenees—Great successes of the Republicans—Siege of Belgrade, which is taken—Great Defeat of the Spaniards near Figueras—Invasion of Biscay, and defeat of the Spaniards—They sue for Peace—Renewal of Hostilities in Flanders—British retire to the right bank of the Meuse—Battle of Ruremonde, and Defeat of the Austrians—They cross the Rhine—Active pursuit of the English by the Republicans—British take a position behind the Waal—Venloo is taken—Siege of Nimeguen, which also falls—Misunderstanding of the Dutch and English—Winter Campaign of Pichegru—He makes a general Attack on the Allied Position—Walmoden retires towards Hanover—Dutch in vain sue for Peace—French cross the Waal—Stadtholder embarks for England—Revolution at Amsterdam, which admits the French troops—Dutch Fleet captured by the French cavalry—Violent measures of Spoliation adopted by the French towards the Dutch—Concluding operations on the Rhine—Army of the Moselle occupies Treves—Allies driven over the Rhine, and Mayence invested—Conclusion of the Campaign in Savoy—Renewal of the war in la Vendée—Storming of Turreau's intrenched Camps—Rise of the Chouan War—Its vast extent—Immense results of the Campaign—The prodigious Forces of the Republic—Great issues of Assignats to support the enormous expenditure of Government—Progressive increase of the French forces during the Campaign—The period of success for the Allies was past—General Reflections on the Campaign—Great military effect of the French frontier Fortresses.**

“THE war,” says Jomini, “so rashly provoked by the declamations of the Girondists, was not commenced in good earnest; and it was already evident that all the established relations and balance of power in Europe were to be dissolved in the struggle. France and England had hardly yet joined in mortal conflict, and yet it was easy to foresee that the one was destined to become irresistible at land, and the other to acquire the dominion of the seas (1).”

(1) Jom. v. 3.

Military strength and naval weakness of France in consequence of the Revolution. It was not the mere energy of the Revolution, nor the closing of all other avenues of employment, which produced the fearful military power of France. These causes, while they alone were in operation, proved totally insufficient to withstand the shock of the disciplined armies of Germany. It was the subsequent despotism of the Committee of Public Safety which consolidated the otherwise discordant materials of the Revolution, and, by superinducing the terror of authority on the fervour on freedom, favoured the growth of military prowess. Liberty without discipline would have perished in licentiousness; discipline without spirit would have proved inadequate to the struggle; it was the combination of the two which became so fatal to the European monarchies, and by turning all the energies of France into one regulated channel, converted the Reign of Terror into the school of conquest.

But while these changes were in progress on the continent of Europe, a very different fate awaited the naval armaments of France. Power at sea, unlike victory at land, cannot spring from mere suffering, or from the energy of destitute warriors with arms in their hands. Fleets require nautical habits, commercial wealth, and extensive credit; without an expenditure of capital, and the gradual formation of a nursery of seamen, it is in vain to contend with an established power on that element. The destruction of the capital and commerce of France during the fury of the Revolution, while it augmented by the misery it produced, the military, destroyed by the penury it occasioned, the naval resources of the Republic. Before the English fleets had issued from their harbours, the flag of France had already disappeared from the seas; commercial wealth, private enterprise were extinguished; and the sanguinary government found that victories were not to be acquired at sea as conquest at land, by merely forcing column after column of conscripts on board their vessels (1).

Respective Navies of the two Powers. The consequence was, that from the very first, the naval superiority of England became apparent. France, at the commencement of the war, had seventy-five ships of the line, and seventy frigates; but the officers, chiefly drawn from the aristocratical classes, had in great part emigrated at the commencement of the Revolution; and those of an inferior order who supplied their place, were deficient both in the education and experience requisite in the naval service. On the other hand, England had one hundred and twenty-nine ships of the line, and above one hundred frigates, of whom ninety of each class were immediately put in commission, while seamen of the best description, to the amount of eighty-five thousand, were drawn from her inexhaustible merchant service. Unable to face their enemies in large squadrons, the French navy remained in total inactivity; but their merchants, destitute of any pacific employment for their money, fitted out an immense number of privateers, which, for a considerable time, proved extremely injurious to the British commerce (2).

The efforts of Government at the same period were vigorously directed to the suppression of sedition in Great-Britain. The great extent and obvious danger of the illegal and revolutionary societies which had been formed in every part of England, in close alliance with the French Convention, left no room for doubt that vigorous measures were necessary to arrest the contagion.

(1) *Jom. v. 4. Th. vi. 27.*

(2) *New Ann. Register, 1794, pp. 336—342. Jom. v. 278, James, i. App. No. 6.*

Suspension  
of the Ha-  
beas Corpus  
Act.

For this purpose the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was proposed in Parliament, by Government, and excited the most angry discussions both in the legislature and the nation.

Mr. Fox objected in the strongest manner to the proposed measure, as destructive to the best principles of English liberty. "Were the Government about," he exclaimed, "in their rage at the hatred excited by their tyranny, to erect tribunals to punish the indignant public? Was terror, as in France, to be made the order of the day, and not a voice to be allowed to be lifted against Government? Was it resolved to demolish the British Constitution, one part after another, under pretence of preventing its destruction by French principles? The object of the societies, which they did not scruple to avow, was to obtain universal suffrage. The word Convention was now held up as an object of alarm, as if from it some calamity impended over the country; and yet, what was a Convention, but an assembly? If the people did any thing illegal, they were liable to be imprisoned and punished at the common law. Did it follow that because improper ideas of government had been taken up by the French, or because liberty had been there abused, that similar misfortunes would befall this country? Had that nation been protected by a Habeas Corpus Act, had the Government been constrained by standing laws to respect the rights of the community, these tenets would never have found an entrance into that unhappy country. By parity of reason they were only to be dreaded here, if the safeguards of the constitution were removed. Were the freedom of meeting to complain of grievances to be taken away, what would soon become of our boasted Constitution? And if it is to be withdrawn till the discontented are rooted out, or the thirst for uncontrolled power assuaged in Government, it will never be restored, and the liberties of Englishmen are finally destroyed."

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr. Pitt, that the question was, "Whether the dangers threatened to the state were not greater than any arising from the suspension proposed, which was only to last for six months, and in the meantime would not affect the rights of any class of society. The truth was, that we were driven to the necessity of imitating French violence, to resist the contagion of French principles. Was lenity to be admitted when the Constitution was at stake? Were a Convention upon Jacobin principles once established, who could foresee where it would end? Not to stop the progress of their opinions, were no better than granting a toleration to sedition and anarchy. It is in vain to deny the existence of designs against the Government and Constitution; and what mode of combating them can be so reasonable as the present suspension, which does not oppose the right of the people to meet together to petition for reform or a redress of abuses, but only aims at preventing the establishment of a power in the state superior to that of Parliament itself? The papers produced before the Committee demonstrate clearly that this is their object; and that they are leagued with all the societies which have brought desolation upon France; they have chosen a central spot to facilitate the assembly of demagogues from all quarters. Every society has been requested to transmit an account of its numbers, and arms have been procured and liberally distributed; unless these proceedings are speedily checked, the Government will soon be set at nought, and a revolution with all its horrors overspread the land."

Moved by these arguments the House of Commons passed the bill for sus-

May 16,  
1794.

Treason  
Trials in  
England  
and Scot-  
land.

pension by a majority of 271 to 42. It was adopted by the Lords without a division (1).

Various prosecutions took place in Scotland, and the attention of the people was deeply excited by the trial of Hardy, Thelwall, and Horne Tooke, for treason in England. The documents on which the prosecution was founded left no doubt that these persons had been deeply implicated in designs for the change, if not the subversion of the government, by means of a convention of their own formation, not the constitutional channel of Parliament; but their acquittal by the independent verdict of a British jury, is to be regarded as an eminently fortunate event at that period. After so singular a triumph of popular principle, the most factious lost the power of alleging that the liberties of England were on the decline; satisfied with this great victory over their supposed oppressors, the people relapsed into their ancient habits of loyalty; the spirit of innovation, deprived of foreign support, and steadily resisted by the government, rapidly withered in the British soil; the passions of men, turned into another channel, soon fixed on different objects, and the prosecution of the war with France became as great a source of interest to the multitude, as it had ever been to remodel the Constitution after the example of the Constituent Assembly (2).

The continuance of the war again gave rise to animated debates in both Houses of Parliament. On the part of the opposition, it was urged by Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan: "That the conduct of government since the war commenced had been a total departure from the principles of moderation on which they had so much prided themselves before it broke out. They then used language which breathed only the strictest neutrality, and this continued even after the King had been dethroned, and many of the worst atrocities of the Revolution had been perpetrated: but now, even though we did not altogether reject negotiation, we issued declarations evidently calculated to render it impossible, and shake all faith in our national integrity. The allies had first by Prince Cobourg issued a proclamation, in which they engaged to retain whatever strongholds they might conquer, merely in pledge for Louis XVII, and five days afterwards, to their eternal disgrace, they had revoked that very proclamation, and openly avowed the intention, since uniformly acted upon, of making a methodical war of conquest on France. Supposing that the English government should be able to clear itself of all share in this infamous transaction, what was to be said of the declaration issued by Lord Hood on the 23d August, on the capture of Toulon, wherein he took possession of the town on the express conditions of maintaining the constitution of 1789, preserving the fleet of Louis XVII, and protecting all Frenchmen who repaired to our standard; after which came a dark enigmatical declaration from his Majesty, which, stripped of the elegant rubbish with which it was loaded, amounted merely to this, that the restoration of monarchy was the only condition on which we would treat with France.

"Has any thing occurred to alter the probability of success in the war? Have the triumphs of the coalition in Flanders been so very brilliant, the success of Lord Moira's expedition so decisive, the efforts at Toulon so victorious, as to afford more cheering prospects than were held out at its commencement? Have the internal condition of that country, and the prospects of the Royalist

(1) Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 268—274. Parl. Deb.  
xx. 274—299.

(2) Ann. Reg. 1794, 268, 269.

party, improved so much under the system of foreign attack, as to render it advisable to continue the contest for their sakes? Is not the internal state of France so divided, that it is impossible to say that the Royalist party, even in the districts most attached to monarchical principles, could agree on any form of government? And what have we done to support them? Liberated the garrisons of Valenciennes and Mayence, when they were shut up within their walls, and given them the means, by the absurd capitulation which we granted, of acting with decisive effect against their Royalist fellow-citizens in the west of France!

"All the treaties we have entered into contained a clause by which the contracting parties bound themselves not to lay down their arms while any part of the territory of either of them remained in the hands of the enemy. How have they adhered, or are likely to adhere to this stipulation? How has Prussia adhered? Why, she publicly declared her intention of laying down her arms, at the very time when large parts of her Allies' territories were in the occupation of the enemy, because she had discovered that the war was burdensome. The Emperor has refused to agree to the clause, and Prussia has been retained an unwilling and feeble combatant on our side only by the bribe of enormous subsidies. It is evident what the result will be: our Allies will one by one drop off, or become so inefficient as to be perfectly useless when the contest becomes either perilous or burdensome; and we shall be left alone, with the whole weight of a contest on our own shoulders, undertaken for no legitimate object, continued for no conceivable end.

"It is in vain to conceal that we have made no advance whatever towards any rational prospect of closing the contest with either honour or advantage. In the first campaign, the Duke of Brunswick was defeated, and Flanders overrun; in the next, the most formidable confederacy ever formed in Europe has been baffled, and a furious civil war in different parts of the Republic extinguished. What have we to oppose to this astonishing exertion of vigour? The capture of a few sugar islands in the West Indies. Of what avail are they, or even the circumscribing the territorial limits of France itself, when such elements of strength exist in its interior? But let us revert to our old policy of attending to our maritime concerns, and, disregarding the anarchy and civil wars of the neighbouring states, and then, indeed, the conquests in the East and West Indies would afford an excellent foundation for the only desirable object, a general pacification. All views of aggrandizement on the part of France *are evidently unattainable, and must be abandoned by that power*: so that the professed objects of the war, permanent security to ourselves, may now securely be obtained (1)."

On the other hand, it was contended by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Jenkinson (2). "That the real object of the war from the outset had been to obtain indemnity for the past and security for the future. Are either of these objects likely to be obtained at this period? At present, there is no security for the continuance of peace, even if it were signed, for a single hour. Every successive faction which has risen to the head of affairs in France, has perished the moment that it attempted to imprint moderation on the external or internal measures of the Revolution. What overthrew the administration of Necker? Moderation! What destroyed the Orleanists, the Girondists, the Brissotins, and all the various parties which have successively risen and fallen in that

(1) Parl. Hist. xxxi. 615, 623, 632.

(2) Afterwards Lord Liverpool.

troubled hemisphere? Moderation. What has given its long lease of power to the anarchical faction of which Robespierre is the head? The total want of it: the infernal energy, unmeasured wickedness of its measures. What prospect is there of entering into a lasting accommodation with a power; or what the guarantee for the observance of treaties of a faction, whom a single nocturnal tumult may hurl from the seat of government, to make way for some other more outrageous and extravagant than itself.

"The campaign hitherto has only lasted a few weeks; yet in that time we have taken Landrecies, formerly considered as the key of France, and though we have lost Courtray and Menin, yet the vigour and resolution with which the Allied army has combated, gives good reason to hope, if not for a successful march to Paris, (which, however, is by no means improbable,) at least for such an addition to the frontier barrier as may prove at once a curb on France, and an excellent base for offensive operations. It is impossible to say what government we are to propose for France in the event of the Jacobins being overthrown, because that must depend on the circumstances of the times, and the wishes of its inhabitants; but this much may safely be affirmed, that, with the sanguinary faction who now rule its councils, accommodation is impossible.

"The present is not a contest for distant or contingent objects: it is not a contest for power or glory: as little is it a contest for commercial advantage, or any particular form of government: it is a contest for the security, the tranquillity, and the very existence of Great-Britain, connected with that of every established government, and every country in Europe. This was the object of the war from its commencement; and every hour tends more strongly to demonstrate its justice. In the outset, the internal anarchy of France, how distressing or alarming soever, was not deemed a sufficient ground for the hostile interference of this country: but could the same be affirmed, when the King was beheaded, and a revolutionary army, spreading everywhere the most dangerous doctrines, overwhelmed the whole Low-Countries? Is that danger now at an end? The prospect of bringing the war to a conclusion, as well as the security for any engagements which we may form with France, must ultimately depend upon the destruction of those principles now triumphant in France, which are alike subversive of every regular government, and destructive of all good faith. We do not disclaim any interference in the internal affairs of that country; on the contrary, should an opportunity occur where it may be practised with advantage, we will not engage to abstain from it: we only say, that such is not the primary object of the contest; and that, if attempted, it will be, as has been the case in all former wars, considered as an operation of the war.

"There is no contradiction between the proclamation of Lord Hood at Toulon, and the declaration of his majesty of 29th October. Both promise protection to such of the French as choose to declare for a constitutional monarchy; and to both we shall adhere. By entering into a negotiation, we should give confidence and vigour to the French, and entirely dissolve the formidable confederacy formed to lower its ambition. While the present system continues in France we can have no peace, on any terms short of absolute ruin and dishonour: by an express law of their constitution, any Frenchman who shall enter into a negotiation with this country, on any other terms, than surrendering our constitution, dethroning our virtuous Sovereign, and introducing into this country the horrible anarchy which prevails

in their distracted state, is declared a traitor. Are we prepared to make such sacrifices to obtain the blessings of fraternization with the disciples of Robespierre? Nor let it be supposed that the colonial conquests we have made are of little moment in bringing about in the end a termination to this frightful contest. Is it of no moment in the first year of the war to have cut up these resources, and destroyed the sinews of their commerce? The injury to their revenues thence arising may not be felt during the continuance of the monstrous and gigantic expedients of finance to which they have had recourse; but it is not on that account the less real, or the less likely to be felt on the restoration of such a regular government as may afford us any chance of an accommodation (1)." On a division, the House, by a majority of two hundred and eight to fifty-five, supported the government (2).

Supplies  
and Forces  
voted for  
the year  
1794.

The supplies voted by Parliament for the service of the year 1794, were proportioned to the increasing magnitude and importance of the strife in which the nation was engaged. For the service of the navy eighty-five thousand men were voted; thirty thousand men were added to the regular native army; and the total under arms in the British dominions, including fencibles and militia, raised to 140,000 men, besides forty thousand foreign soldiers employed on the Continent. These numbers were described by Mr. Pitt as "unparalleled, and such as could hardly be exceeded;" such was the happy ignorance of those times in regard to the exertions of which a nation was capable. To meet these extraordinary exertions an income of L. 20,000,000, besides L. 11,800,000 for the charge of the debt, were required; and for this purpose a loan of L. 11,000,000 was voted by Parliament; so early in the contest was this ruinous system of laying upon posterity the burdens of the moment adopted (3).

April 1793.

Meanwhile, the ascendancy of the English navy soon produced its wonted effects on the colonial possessions of their enemies. Soon after the commencement of hostilities, Tobago was taken by a British squadron; and in the beginning of March 1794, an expedition was fitted out against Martinique, which, after a vigorous resistance, fell on the 23d. Shortly after, the principal forts in St.-Domingo were wrested from the Republicans by the English forces, while the wretched planters, a prey to the flames lighted by Brissot and the friends of negro emancipation, at the commencement of the revolution, were totally ruined. No sooner was this success achieved, than the indefatigable English commander, Sir John Jarvis, and Sir Charles Grey, turned their arms against St.-Lucia, which was subjected to the British dominion on the 4th April. Guadaloupe was next attacked, and on the 25th, that fine island, with all its rich dependencies, was added to the list of the conquered colonies. Thus, in little more than a month, the French were entirely dispossessed of their West India possessions, with hardly any loss to the victorious nation (4).

The once beautiful island of St.-Domingo meanwhile continued a prey to the frightful disorders arising from precipitate emancipation. "It had gone through," says the Republican historian, "the greatest succession of calamities of which history makes mention." The Whites had at first embraced with enthusiasm the cause of the Revolution, and the Mulattoes, to whom the

(1) Parl. Hist. xxxi. 156, 632.

(2) Ibid. 658.

(3) Parl. Hist. xxx. 557, 563. Ann. Reg. 1794,

69, 70.

(4) Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 106, 337, 339, 340. Th. vi. 301, 302.



Constituent Assembly had extended the gift of freedom, were not less attached to the principles of democracy, and openly aspired to dispossess the planters, by force, of those political privileges which had hitherto been their exclusive property. But, in the midst of these contests, the negroes had revolted against both, and without distinguishing friend from foe, applied the firebrand indiscriminately to every civilized dwelling. Distracted by these horrors, the Constituent Assembly at once declared them all free. From the moment that emancipation was announced, the colony became the theatre of the most horrible devastations; and the contending parties among the higher orders mutually threw upon each other the blame of having brought a frightful party into their contests, whose ravages were utterly destructive to both. In truth, it was owing to neither, but to the precipitate measures of emancipation, dictated by the ardent and inexperienced philanthropists of the Constituent Assembly; and which have consigned that unhappy colony, after thirty years of unexampled suffering, to a state of slavery (1), under the name of "The Rural Code," infinitely worse than that of the French planters.

And in the Mediterranean. In the Mediterranean also the power of the British navy was speedily felt. The disaster at Toulon having totally paralyzed the French navy in that quarter, the English fleet was enabled to carry the land forces, now rendered disposable by the evacuation of Toulon to whatever quarter they choose. Corsica was the selected point of attack, which early in 1794 had shown symptoms of revolt against the Republican authorities. Three thousand soldiers and marines were landed, and after some considerable successes nearly effected the subjection of the island by the capture of the fortress of Bastia, which capitulated at the end of May. The only remaining stronghold of the Republicans, Calvi, was besieged until the 1st August, when it surrendered to the British arms. The crown of Corsica, offered by Paoli, and the aristocratical party, to the King of England, was accepted, and efforts immediately made to confer upon the inhabitants a constitution similar to that of Great Britain; a project about as practicable as it would have been to have clothed the British plains with the fruits which ripen under its sunny cliffs (2).

Victory of the 1st June, by Admiral Howe. But a more glorious triumph was awaiting the British arms. The French Government having, by great exertions, got twenty-six ships of the line into a state fit for service at Brest, and being extremely anxious to secure the arrival of a large fleet laden with provisions, which was approaching from America, and promised to relieve the famine which was now felt with uncommon severity in all parts of France, sent positive orders to Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse to put to sea. On the 20th of May, the French set sail; and on the 28th, Lord Howe, who was well aware of the expected arrival of the convoy, hove in sight, with the Channel fleet of England, consisting of twenty-six line-of-battle ships. The French were immediately formed in line, in order of battle, and a partial action ensued between the rearguard of their line and the vanguard of the British squadron; in the course of which, the *Révolutionnaire* was so much damaged that she struck to the *Audacious*, but not being taken possession of by the victors before night-fall, was towed the following morning into Rochefort. During the next day, the manoeuvres were renewed on both sides, each party endeavouring to

(1) Th. vi. 301. Mackenzie's *St. Domingo*, 201. (2) *Journ.* v. 192. *Ann. Reg.* 1794, 340, 341.

obtain the weather-gage of the other; and Lord Howe; at the head of his fleet, passed through the French squadron; but the whole ships not having taken the position assigned to them, the action, after a severe commencement, was discontinued, and the British Admiral strove with the utmost skill to maintain the wind of the enemy. During the two following days, a thick fog concealed the rival fleets from each other, though they were so near, that both sides were well aware that a great battle was approaching, and with difficulty restrained the ardour by which they were animated (1).

At length, on the 1st June, a day ever memorable in the naval annals of England, the sun broke forth with unusual splendour, and discovered the French fleet in order of battle, a few miles from the English, awaiting the combat, while an agitated sea promised the advantage of the wind to an immediate attack. Lord Howe instantly bore down, in an oblique direction, upon the enemy's line, designing to repeat the manœuvre long known in the British Navy, but first traced to scientific principles by Clerk of Eldin, and so successfully carried into execution by Rodney on the 12th April. Having the weather-gage of the enemy, he was enabled to break their line near the centre, and double with a preponderating force on the one-half of their squadron. The signal he displayed was No. 39, the purport of which was, "that, having the weather-gage of the enemy, the Admiral means to pass between the ships of their line and engage them to leeward, leaving, however, a discretion to each captain to engage on the windward or leeward." The French fleet was drawn up in close line, stretching nearly east and west; and a heavy fire commenced upon the British fleet as soon as they came within range. The English did not come perpendicularly upon their adversaries as at Trafalgar, but made sail abreast in such a manner as that each ship should, as soon as possible, cut the line and get alongside of its destined antagonist, and engage it to leeward, so that if worsted the enemy could not get away. Had the Admiral's orders been literally obeyed, or capable of complete execution, the most decisive naval victory recorded in history would in all probability have attended the British arms; but the importance of specific obedience in the vital point of engaging the enemy to leeward was not then generally understood, and the enemy's line was so regular and compact, that in most places it was impervious, and five only of the ships succeeded in passing through. The *César*, in particular, which was the leading vessel when the signal for close action was flying from the Admiral's mast-head, backed her main-topsails, and engaged on the windward of the enemy; a disheartening circumstance, though arising, as it afterwards appeared, from want of capacity rather than timidity on the part of its captain. Howe, however, was not discouraged, but held steadily on, walking on the front of his poop along with Sir Robert Curtis, Sir Andrew Douglas, and other officers, while the crew were falling fast around him, and the spars and rigging rattled down on all sides, under the terrible and constantly increasing fire of the enemy. With perfect composure the British Admiral ordered not a shot to be fired, but the pilot to lay him alongside of the *Montagne* of 120 guns, the greatest vessel in the French line, and probably the largest then in the world. So awful was the prospect that awaited the French vessel from the majestic advance of the British Admiral, that Jean-Bon Saint-André, the French Commissioner of the Convention on board, overcome with terror, took refuge

(1) *Jom. v. 284, 288. James, i. 205—219. Th. vi. 304. Ann. Reg. 1797, 22—243.*

below. After many entreaties, Howe allowed a straggling fire to be returned, but from the main and quarter-deck only; and reserving his whole broadside, poured it with terrible effect into the stern of the *Montagne*, as he slowly passed through the line between that huge three-decker and the *Jacobin* of 80 guns. So close did the ships pass on this occasion, that the Tricolor flag, as it waved at the *Montagne's* flag-staff, brushed the main and mizen-shrouds of the *Queen Charlotte*; and so terrible the effect of the broadside, that three hundred men were killed or wounded by that discharge (1).

Fearful of encountering a similar broadside on the other side, the captain of the *Jacobin* stretched across under the *Montagne's* lee, and thus threw herself a little behind that vessel right in the *Queen Charlotte's* way, in the very position which Howe had designed for himself to engage the enemy's three-decker. The English Admiral, therefore, was obliged to alter his course a little, and pass aslant between the two vessels, and having thus got between them, opened a tremendous fire on both. The *Jacobin* soon made sail, to get out of the destructive range, and being to the leeward of the British Admiral, he effected this; but the *Montagne* could not do the same, being to the windward, and she would unquestionably have been taken, as she was hardly firing at all after the first awful broadside, when the foretop-mast of the *Queen Charlotte* came down; upon which the *Montagne*, taking advantage of her momentary inability to move, contrived to sheer off, leaving the British Admiral now engaged with the two ships second and third astern of her. The *Vengeur* of 74 guns was warmly engaged at this time with the *Brunswick* under Harvey; but another French ship, the *Achille*, came up on the other side, and a terrible combat began on the part of the British vessel, thus engaged on both hands. It was sustained, however, with admirable courage. Captain Harvey was severely wounded in the hottest part of the engagement; but before being carried down he said, "Persevere, my brave lads, in your duty; continue the action with spirit for the honour of our King and country, and remember my last words, 'The colours of the *Brunswick* shall never be struck.'"—Such heroism was not long of meeting with its reward: the *Ramillies* soon after came up, and opened her fire upon the *Vengeur*; the load was taken off the *Brunswick*, and by a fortunate shot the rudder of the French vessel was shot away, and a large opening beat in her stern, in which the water rushed with great violence. The *Vengeur* was now found to be sinking (2); the *Achille* made off, followed by the *Ramillies*, to whom she soon struck; and the *Vengeur* shortly after went down with two hundred of her crew, four hundred and fifty having been humanely taken off by the boats of the *Alfred* and *Culloden* (3).

(1) Barrow's *Life of Howe*, 232, 233. Brenton, i. 129, 130. James, i. 147, 148. *Vict. et Conq.* iii. 20. *Jqm.* v. 290. *Toul.* iv. 247.

(2) James, i. 162, 165. Brenton, i. 130, 131. Barrow's *Howe*, 233, 234. *Jom.* v. 291. *Toul.* iv. 247.

(3) It was stated in the French Convention, and has been repeated in all the French histories, that when the *Vengeur* sunk her crew were shouting "Vive la République!" Knowing that the gallantry of the French was equal to such an effort, the author with pleasure transcribed this statement in his former editions; but he has now ascertained that it was unfounded, not only from the account of Captain Brenton (i. 434), but from the authority of

a gallant naval officer, Admiral Griffiths, who was in the *Brunswick* on the occasion, and saw the *Vengeur* go down. There were cries heard, but they were piteous cries for relief, which the British boats afforded to the utmost of their power. Among the survivors of the *Vengeur's* crew were Captain Renaudin and his son, a brave boy of twelve years of age. They were taken up by different boats, and mutually mourned each other as dead; till they accidentally met at Portsmouth in the street, and rushed into each other's arms with a rapture undescribable. They were both soon after exchanged; a braver and more humane father and son never breathed.—James, i. 165.

The French now began to move off in all quarters, and the British ships with their prizes closed round their Admiral. The damage sustained by the English was inconsiderable, except in four ships, which were disabled for farther service; fifteen sail of the line were ready to renew the battle; they had still the weather-gage of the enemy; ten of his line had struck, though six only of them had been secured, and five of his ships were dismasted, and were slowly going off under their sprit-sails. Had Nelson been at the head of the fleet, there can be little doubt they would all have been taken, and perhaps a victory as decisive as Trafalgar totally destroyed the Brest fleet. But the British admirals at that period were in a manner ignorant of their own prowess; the securing of the prizes taken was deemed the great object, and thus the pursuit was discontinued, and the enemy, contrary to all expectation got his dismasted ships off, and before dark, was entirely out of sight. Six ships of the line, however, beside the *Vengeur*, which sunk, remained in the possession of the British Admiral, and were brought into Plymouth; while the remains of the French squadron, diminished by eight of their number, and with a loss of eight thousand men, took refuge in the roads of Berthaume, and ultimately regained the harbour of Brest, shattered, dismasted, riddled with shot: how different from the splendid fleet which had so recently departed amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants! The loss of the British was two hundred and ninety killed (1), and eight hundred and fifty-eight wounded, in all eleven hundred and forty-eight, being less than that sustained in the six French ships alone which were made prizes.

The Republicans were in some degree consoled for this disaster, by the ~~same~~ arrival of the great American convoy, consisting of one hundred and sixty sail, and valued at L.5,000,000 sterling; a supply of incalculable importance to the wants of a population whom the Reign of Terror and civil dissension had brought to the verge of famine. They entered the harbour of Brest a few days after the engagement, having escaped, as if by a miracle, the vigilance of the British cruisers. Their safety was in a great degree owing to the sagacity of the Admiral, who traversed the scene of destruction a day or two after the engagement, and judging from the magnitude and number of the wrecks which were floating about, that a terrible battle must have taken place, concluded, that the victorious party would not be in a condition for pursuit, and resolved to hold on his course for the French harbour (2).

Tactics by which the Victory was gained. Lord Howe gained so decisive a success from the adoption of the same principle, which gave victory to Frederic at Leuthen, to Napoleon at Austerlitz, and Wellington at Salamanca, viz. to bring an overwhelming force to one point, and reduce one-half of the enemy's fleet to be the passive spectator of the destruction of the other (3). His mode of attack, which brought his whole line at once into action with the enemy, seems clearly preferable to that adopted by Nelson at Trafalgar in sailing down in perpendicular lines: for that exposed the leading ships to imminent danger before the succeeding ones came up.—Had he succeeded in penetrating the enemy's line at all points, and engaged the whole to windward, he would have brought twenty ships of the line into Spithead. To a skilful and intrepid squadron, who do not fear to engage at the cannon mouth with their enemy, such a manœuvre offers even greater chances of success at sea

(1) *Jom. v. 296. Toul. iv. 248. Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 34. James, i. 172, 174. Brenton, i. 141, 148. Barrow's Howe, 251, 252.*

(2) *Jom. v. 261.*

(3) *Jom. v. 238. Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 344.*

than at land, because the complete absence of obstacles on the level expanse of water enables the attacking squadron to calculate with more certainty upon reaching their object; and the advantage of the wind, if once obtained, renders it proportionally difficult for one part of the enemy's line to be brought up to the relief of the other.

Its great moral effect in England. Never was a victory more seasonable, than Lord Howe's, to the British Government. The war, preceded as it had been by violent party divisions in England, had been regarded with lukewarm feelings by a large portion of the people; and the friends of freedom dared not wish for the success of the British arms, lest it should extinguish the dawn of liberty in the world. But the Reign of Terror had shocked the best feelings of all the respectable portion of this party, and the victory of 1st June captivated the affections of the giddy multitude. The ancient but half extinguished loyalty of the British people awakened at the sound of their victorious cannon; and the hereditary rivalry of the two nations revived at so signal a triumph over the Republican arms. From this period may be dated the commencement of that firm union among the inhabitants of the country, and that ardent enthusiasm in the contest, which soon extinguished the seeds of former dissension, and ultimately carried the British empire triumphant through the severest struggles which had engaged the nation since the days of Alfred (1).

Vast Military Preparations of France. Vast were the preparations for war made by the Committee of Public Safety in France. Her territory resembled an immense camp; the decrees of the 23d August and 5th September, had precipitated the whole youth of the republic to the frontiers, and 1,200,000 men in arms, were prepared to obey the sovereign mandates of the Convention. After deducting from this immense force the garrisons, the troops destined to the service of the interior, and the sick, upwards of 700,000 were ready to act on the offensive, a force much greater than all the European Monarchies could bring forward to meet them. These enormous armies, though in part but little experienced, were greatly improved in discipline since the conclusion of the preceding campaign; the months of winter had been sedulously employed in instructing them in the rudiments of the military art; the glorious successes at the close of the year had revived the spirit of conquest among the soldiers, and the whole were directed by a central government, possessing, in the highest degree, the advantage of unity of action and consummate military talent (2).

Wielding at command so immense a military force, the Committee of Public Safety were prodigal of the blood of their soldiers. To advance incessantly to the attack, to bring up column after column, till the enemy were wearied out, or overpowered, to regard as nothing any losses which led to the advance of Republican standards, were the maxims on which they conducted the war. No other power could venture upon such an expenditure of life, because none had such inexhaustible resources at their disposal. Money and men abounded in every quarter; the camps were overflowing with conscripts, the fortresses with artillery, the treasury with assignats. The preceding campaign had cost above L. 400,000 sterling, but the resources of government were undiminished. Three-fourths of the whole property of France was at its disposal; and on this vast fund a paper currency

(1) Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 282, 283.

(2) Jom. v. 28, 30. Th. vi. 271, 272. Ann. Reg.; 1794, 322.

was issued, possessing a forced circulation, and amply sufficient for the most prodigal expenditure. The value of assignats in circulation in the course of the year 1794, was not less than L. 200,000,000 sterling, and there was no appearance of its diminution (1). The rapid depreciation of this paper, arising from the enormous profusion with which it was issued, was nothing to a power which enforced its mandates by the guillotine; the government creditor was compelled to receive it at par, and it signified nothing to them though he lost his whole fortune in the next exchange with any citizen of the Republic.

Talent with which it was wielded. What rendered this force still more formidable, was the ability with which it was conducted, and the talent which was evidently rising up among its ranks. The genius of Carnot had from the very commencement selected the officers of greatest talent from among the multitude, who presented themselves; and their rapid transference from one situation to another, gave ample opportunities for discovering who were the men on whom reliance could really be placed (2). The whole talent of France, in consequence of the extinction of civil employment, was centred in the army, and indefatigable exertions everywhere made to communicate to headquarters the names of the young men who had distinguished themselves in any grade. The central government, guided by that able statesman, had discovered the real secret of military operations, and by accumulating an overwhelming force upon one part of the enemy's line, soon acquired a decided superiority over the Austrians, who adhered with blind obstinacy to the system of extending their forces. In the prosecution of this system, the French had peculiar advantages, from the unity of their government, the central situation of their forces, the interior line on which they acted, the fortified towns which guarded their frontier, and the unbounded means of repairing losses, which they possessed; while the Allies, acting on an exterior circle, paralysed by divisions among their sovereigns, and at a distance from their resources, were unable either to combine for any vigorous offensive operations, or render each other any assistance when pressed by the enemy. Incredible efforts were made at the same time to organize and equip this prodigious body of soldiers. "A Revolution," said Barrère, "must rapidly supply all our wants. It is to the human mind what the sun of Africa is to vegetation. Monarchies require peace, but a Republic can exist only in war-like energy: slaves have need of repose, but freemen of the fermentation of freedom; regular governments of rest, but the French Republic of revolutionary activity." The *École militaire* was speedily re-established; and the youth of the better classes marched on foot from all parts of France, to be there instructed in the rudiments of the military art; one horse out of twenty-five was everywhere levied, and the proprietor paid only nine hundred francs in paper, hardly equivalent, from its depreciation, to a louis in gold. By these means, however, the cavalry and artillery were furnished with horses, and a considerable body of educated young men rapidly provided for the army. The manufactories of arms at Paris, and in the provinces, were kept in incessant activity; artificial means universally adopted for the production of saltpetre, and gunpowder in immense quantities daily forwarded to the armies (3).

(1) Ann. Reg. 1794, 324, 345. Toul. iv. 321.  
Jom. v. 30.

(2) Carnot's Memoirs, 32.

(3) Th. vi. 247—272, Jom. v. 37. Carnot, 32.  
Hard. ii. 457.

Indefatigable were the exertions made by Mr. Pitt to provide a force on the part of the Allies capable of combating this gigantic foe; and never were the efforts of his master spirit more required to heal the divisions and extinguish the jealousies which had arisen in the coalition. Poland was the apple of discord which had called forth these separate interests and awakened these jealousies; and in the plans of aggrandizement which they were all pursuing in regard to that unhappy state, is to be found the true secret of their neglect of the great task of combating the French Revolution, and of its rapid and early success. Prussia, intent on territorial acquisition on the shores of the Vistula, and desirous above every thing of securing Dantzic, the key to that stream, and the great emporium of the grain commerce in the north of Europe, had already assembled forty thousand men under the King in person for the siege of Warsaw; and the cabinet of Berlin, unable to bear at the same time the expense of a costly war on the eastern and western frontiers of the Monarchy, had in consequence greatly diminished their forces on the Rhine, and openly announced their intention of reducing them to the contingent which they were bound to furnish as a member of the empire, which March 11, 1794. was only twenty thousand men. Orders had even been despatched to Marshal Moellendorf, who commanded their army on the Rhine, to retreat by divisions towards the Elbe; while, at the same time, with preposterous Jan. 31, 1794. inconsistency(1), Frederic-William addressed a letter to the Arch-Chancellor of the Empire, in which he bewailed in piteous terms the public danger, and urged the immediate convocation of the anterior circles to deliberate on the most effectual means of withstanding the Revolutionary torrent with which they were menaced (2).

The cabinet of Vienna were greatly alarmed at this official declaration of the intention of the Prussian government to withdraw from the coalition, and their chagrin was not diminished by the clear perception which they had, that this untimely and discreditable defection was mainly prompted by a desire to secure a share in the partition of Poland, of which they saw little prospect of their being allowed to participate. They used the most pressing instances, therefore, to induce the cabinet of Berlin to recall their resolution, offered to take a large portion of the Prussian troops into their own pay, provided the other states of Germany would take upon themselves the charges of the remainder, and even urged the immediate formation of a levy *en masse* in all the circles of the empire, immediately threatened with invasion, in order to combat the redoubtable forces which France was pouring forth from all ranks of her population. Austria, however, though so desirous to stimulate others to these last and convulsive efforts, made no attempt to rouse their emulation by setting the example of similar armaments herself; not a regiment was added to the Imperial armies; and the Prussian cabinet, little solicitous to behold the whole population of the empire com-

(1) Hard. ii. 488, 499.

(2) "As it is impossible for me," said the King in that letter, "any longer to continue at my own charges a war so remote from the frontiers of my dominions, and attended with so heavy an expense, I have candidly explained my situation to the principal Allied Powers, and engaged in negotiations with them which are still in dependence. I am, in consequence, under the necessity of applying to the empire, to provide for the costs of my army, if its longer continuance on the theatre of war is deemed essential to the common defence. I implore your

Excellency, therefore, that, in your quality of Arch-Chancellor of the Empire, you will forthwith convocate the anterior circles. An immediate provision for my troops at the expense of these circles, is the only means which remain of saving the empire in the terrible crisis which is approaching; and, unless that step is forthwith taken, they can no longer be employed in the common cause, and I must order them, with regret, to bend their steps towards their own frontier, leaving the empire to its own resources." [Hard. ii. 488, 490.]

bating under the banners of the Cæsars, strenuously resisted the proposal as useless, dangerous, and utterly inconsistent with the principles of the contest in which they were engaged (1).

It soon appeared how ruinous to the common cause this unexpected secession of Prussia would become. The Republican forces in Flanders were nearly 160,000 strong; and Mack, who was entrusted with the chief direction of the campaign by the Allied Powers, finding that the whole forces which the allies could assemble in that quarter would not exceed 150,000, had strongly urged the necessity of obtaining the co-operation of fifty thousand Prussians, in order to cover the Meuse, in conjunction with the Austrian divisions in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg. The Prussians under Moellendorf were cantoned on the two banks of the Seltz, between Oppenheim and Mayence; but when he received the letter from Prince Cobourg requesting his co-operation, he replied in cold and ambiguous terms, "That he was not acquainted with the share which his government may have taken in the formation of the proposed plan of operations: that the views on which it was founded appeared unexceptionable, but that in the existing state of affairs it was attended with obvious inconveniences, and that he could not consent to the march to Treves, lest he should expose Mayence (2)."

These declarations of the intentions of Prussia excited the greater sensation in Europe, that ever since the war began it had been supposed that the cabinets of Berlin and Vienna were united in the closest bands of alliance, and the Convention of Pilnitz was universally regarded as the true basis of the anti-revolutionary coalition. The confederacy appeared to be on the verge of dissolution. Stimulated by the pressing dangers of his situation, the Elector of Mayence, who stood in the front rank of the Germanic Powers, proved indefatigable in his efforts to promote the withdrawing of the Prussian troops, and by his exertions a proposition was favourably received by the diet of the empire, for taking the Prussian troops into the pay of the lesser powers, and the Marshal Moellendorf soon after received orders to suspend his retreat (3).

This change in the Prussian plans arose from the vast exertions which Mr. Pitt at this period made to hold together the bands of the confederacy. Alone of all the statesmen of his day, the English minister perceived the full extent of the danger which menaced Europe from the spreading of the revolutionary torrent over the adjoining states, and the immense peril of this speedily coming to pass from the divisions and distraction of interests which were breaking out among the Allied Powers. No sooner, therefore, was he informed of the intended defection of Prussia, than he exerted all his influence to bring back the cabinet of Berlin to more rational sentiments, and liberally advanced the treasures of England to retain the Prussian troops in a contest so vital to none as to Prussia herself. By his exertions a treaty was signed at the Hague between Prussia, Holland, and Great-Britain; by which it was stipulated that Prussia should retain an army of sixty-two thousand veterans in the field; while the two latter should furnish a subsidy of L.50,000 a-month, besides L.400,000 for putting the army into a fit condition to undertake a campaign, and L.1, 12s. a-month to each man as an equivalent for the expenses of his maintenance while engaged in active ser-

(1) Hard. ii. 481, 488. *Jom.* v. 29. Th. vi. 269.

(2) Hard. ii. 480, 481.

(3) Hard. ii. 501, 502.



vice. By a separate article, it was provided, "that all conquests made by this army, shall be made in the names of the two maritime powers, and shall remain at their disposal during the course of the war, and at the peace shall be made such use of as they shall deem proper (1).

However meritorious were the exertions of Mr. Pitt, in thus again bringing Prussia into the field, after its government had formally announced their intention of withdrawing from the confederacy, it was in part foreseen (2) what the event soon demonstrated, that the succours stipulated from Prussia, would prove of the most inefficient description, and that nothing was to be expected from the troops of a leading power engaged as hirelings contrary to the national feelings, and the secret inclinations of the government, in what they deemed a foreign cause. The discontent of the troops was loudly proclaimed when it transpired that they were to be transferred to the pay of Great-Britain; and they openly murmured at the disgrace of having the soldiers of the great Frederick sold like mercenaries to a foreign power (3).

General Mack, whose subsequent and unexampled misfortunes should not exclude the recollection of the abilities in a particular department which he really possessed, was intrusted by the Austrian and English governments with the preparation of the plan of the campaign; and he proposed one which bore the marks of decided talent, and which, if vigorously carried into effect by a sufficient force, still promised the most brilliant results. This was to complete the opening into the French barrier by the capture of Landrecies; and, having done so, march with the whole Allied army in Flanders, 160,000 strong, straight by Laon on Paris; while the Prussian forces, by a forward movement on the side of Namur, supported the operation. "With 150,000 men," said he, "I would push forward a strong advanced guard to Paris; with 200,000 I would engage to remain there." He proposed that West Flanders should be inundated by troops at the same time, so that the main army, in the course of its perilous advance, should have no disquietude for its flank and rear. This plan was ably conceived and was evidently the one which should have been adopted in the preceding campaign: but it proved abortive, from the strong remonstrances of the inhabitants of West Flanders against a measure which promised to render their province the theatre of war, and the jealousy of the Prussian government, which precluded any effectual co-operation from being obtained on that side of the line (4), and left the whole weight of the contest on the Austrians and English, whose forces were not of sufficient numerical strength for the struggle (5).

(1) Parl. Hist. xxxi. 434, 435. Hard. ii. 504. 505.

(2) It was asked in the House of Peers, with a too prophetic spirit by the Marquis of Lansdown, "Could the King of Prussia, ought the King of Prussia to divest himself of his natural duties? Could it be expected that he would fulfil engagements so trivial in comparison? Was not Poland likely to furnish him employment for his troops, and that, too, at his own door? There never were

two powers hated one another more cordially than Prussia and Austria, and were English guineas likely to allay the discord? Was it not probable that Frederick-William would take our subsidies, but find pretexts for evading the performance of anything in return worthy of the name."—Parl. Hist. xxxi. 456, 458.

(3) Hard. ii. 504, 307.

(4) Hard. 28, 478, 528, 529.

(5) The armies were disposed as follows:—

Forces on both sides.			
FRENCH.		ALLIES.	
Army of the North.	220,000	Flanders	140,000
Moselle and Rhine.	240,000	Duke of York	40,000
Alps.	60,000	Austrians on the Rhine.	60,000
Eastern Pyrenees.	80,000	Prussians on ditto.	65,000
Western ditto.	80,000	Luxembourg	20,000
South.	60,000	Emigrants	12,000
	<b>780,000</b>		<b>337,000</b>

Unaware of the immense military resources and ascending spirit of their adversaries, the Allies resolved to capture Landrecies, and from that base march directly to Paris. Preparatory to this movement, their whole army was, on the 16th April, reviewed by the Emperor of Austria on the plains of Cateau; they amounted nearly to 150,000 men, and were particularly distinguished by the superb appearance of the cavalry, constituting a force apparently capable of conquering the world. Instead of profiting by this immense assemblage of strength to fall upon the still scattered forces of their enemies, the troops were on the following day divided into eight columns, to oppose the French forces, which were still divided in that manner. The siege of Landrecies was shortly after formed, while a large portion of the Allied Army was stationed as a covering force. After ten days of open trenches, and a most severe bombardment, which almost totally destroyed the town, this important fortress capitulated, and the garrison, consisting of five thousand men, was made prisoners of war (1).

Plan of Allies.  
Landrecy  
taken. During the progress of this attack, the French Generals, stimulated by the orders of the Committee of Public Safety, made reiterated efforts to raise the siege. Their endeavours were much aided by the absurd adherence of the Allies to the old plan of dividing their forces; they trembled at the thoughts of leaving a single road open, as if the fate of the war depended upon closing every avenue into Flanders, when they were contemplating a march to Paris. The plan of the Republicans consisted in a series of attacks on the posts and corps forming the long cordon of the Allies, followed by a serious advance of the two wings, the one towards Philippeville, the other Dunkirk. On the 26th April, the movement in advance took place along the whole line. The centre, which advanced against the Duke of York near Cambray, experienced the most bloody reverses. When the Republicans arrived at the redoubts of Troisville, defended by the Duke of York; they were vigorously assailed by the English Guards in front, supported by PRINCE SCHWARTZENBERG, commanding a regiment of Austrian cuirassiers, while General Otto charged them in flank at the head of the English cavalry, and completed their rout. The whole corps were driven back in confusion to Cambray, with the loss of thirty-five pieces of cannon, and above four thousand men. While this disaster was experienced on the left of the French army, their centre was not more successful. They at first gained some advantages over the corps of the Austrians, who there composed the covering force; but the latter having been reinforced, and supported by a numerous artillery, resumed the offensive, and repulsed the assailants with great loss (2).

Efforts of  
the Repub-  
licans to  
raise the  
Siege. But these advantages, how considerable soever, were counter-  
Defeat of  
Clairfait. balanced by a severe check experienced by General Clairfait, whose corps formed the extreme right of the Allied line. On that side the Republicans had assembled fifty thousand men, under Souham and Moreau, which, on the 25th April, advanced against the Austrian forces. Assailed by superior numbers, Clairfait was driven back to Tournay, with the loss of thirty pieces of cannon, and twelve hundred prisoners. His retreat seemed to render wholly desperate the situation of a brigade of three thousand Hanoverians, now shut up in Menin, and soon furiously bombarded. But their brave commander, supported by the resolution of a large body of French emigrants

(1) Hard. ii. 522. Ann. Reg. 1793, p. 328, 330.  
Jom. v. 34, 58. Th. vi. 270, 285.

(2) Jom. v. 55, 57. Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 329. Th.  
vi. 286, 287.

who were attached to his corps, resolved to cut his way through the besiegers, and through the heroic valour of his followers, successfully accomplished his object. Prince Cobourg, upon the intelligence of this misfortune, detached the Duke of York to Tournay to support Clairfait, and remained with the rest of his forces in the neighbourhood of Landrecies, to put that place in a state of defence (1).

Jourdan ordered up from the Rhine to the Sambre. Convinced by the failure of their attacks on the centre of the Allies, that their forces were insufficient in that quarter, the Committee of Public Safety, relying on the inactivity and lukewarmness of the Prussians on the extreme right, took the energetic resolution of ordering Jourdan to reinforce the army of the Moselle with fifteen thousand men drawn from the Rhine, and after leaving a corps of observation at Luxembourg, to march with forty-five thousand men upon the Ardenne Forest, and unite himself to the army on the Sambre. This bold resolution of strengthening to an overwhelming degree, what appeared the decisive point of the long line of operations, and throwing ninety thousand men on the extreme left of the enemy, had a most important effect on the future fate of the campaign; and formed a striking contrast to the measures of the Allies, who deemed themselves insecure, even when meditating offensive operations, unless the whole avenues of the country they occupied were equally guarded by detached corps. The defection of Prussia, which daily became more evident; prevented them from obtaining any co-operation on the left flank to counteract this change in the enemy's line of attack, while, even in their own part of the line, the movements were vacillating, and totally unworthy of the splendid force at their disposal (2).

Various indecisive Actions on the Sambre. On the 10th May, Clairfait, without any co-operation from the other parts of the line, crossed the Lys, and attacked the Republican troops around the town of Cambray. An obstinate engagement ensued, with various success, which was continued on the succeeding day, without any decisive advantage having been gained by either party. Four thousand men were lost on each side, and the opposing forces remained much where they had been at their commencement; a striking proof of the murderous and indecisive nature of this warfare of posts, which, without any adequate success, occasioned an incessant consumption of human life (3).

French driven across the Sambre. But the period was now approaching when the genius of Carnot was to infuse a new element into this indecisive warfare. On the 10th May, the French army on the Sambre, crossed that river, with the design of executing his plan of operations; but the Allies having collected their forces to cover the important city of Mons, and taken post at a fortified position at Grandrengs, a furious battle ensued, which terminated in the Republicans being defeated and driven across the Sambre with the loss of ten pieces of cannon, and four thousand men. But the French having remained masters of their bridges over the river, and being urged by St.-Just and Lebas, again crossed on the 20th, and returned to the charge. But they preserved so bad a look out, that, on the 24th, they were surprised and completely routed by the Austrians, under Prince Kaunitz. The whole army was flying in confusion to the bridges, when KLÉBER arrived in time with fresh troops to arrest the victorious enemy, and preserve his army from total

(1) *Jom. v. 61, 62. Th. vi. 288, 289.*

(2) *Th. vi. 290. Jom. v. 62, 63. Hard. ii. 532.*

(3) *Toul. iv. 320. Jom. v. 66. Th. vi. 291.*

destruction. As it was, however, they were a second time driven over the Sambre, with the loss of four thousand men, and twenty-five pieces of artillery (1).

Battle of  
Turcoing. While blood was flowing in such torrents on the banks of the Sambre, events of still greater importance occurred in West Flanders. The Allies had there collected ninety thousand men, including one hundred and thirty-three squadrons, under the immediate command of the Emperor; and the situation of the left wing of the French suggested the design of cutting it off from the main body of the army, and forcing it back upon the sea, where it could have no alternative but to surrender. For this purpose, their troops were divided into six columns, which were moved by concentric lines on the French corps posted at Turcoing. Had they acted with more concert, and moved on a better line, the attack would have been crowned with the most splendid success; but the old system of dividing their 16th May. forces made it terminate in nothing but disaster. The different columns, some of which were separated from each other by no less than twenty leagues, did not arrive simultaneously at the point of attack: and although each singly acted vigorously when brought into action, there was not the unity in their operations requisite to success. Some inconsiderable advantages were gained near Turcoing on the 17th, but the Republicans having now concentrated their troops in a central position, were enabled to fall with an overwhelming force on the insulated columns of their adversaries. At three in the morning of the 18th, General Souham, with forty-five thousand, attacked the detached corps of General Otto and the Duke of York, while another corps of fifteen thousand advanced against them from the side of Lille; the first was defeated with great loss; the latter, though it at first defended itself with vigour, finding its communication cut off with the remainder of the army, and surrounded by a greatly superior force, disbanded and took to flight; a circumstance which ultimately proved fortunate, as, had they maintained their ground, they certainly would have been made prisoners. So sudden was the rout, that the Duke of York himself owed his safety to the fleetness of his horse; a circumstance which, much to his credit, he had the candour to admit in his official dispatch. Such was the defect of the combinations of Prince Cobourg, that at the time that his central columns were thus overwhelmed by an enormous mass of sixty thousand men, the two columns on the left amounting to not less than thirty thousand, under the Archduke Charles and Kinsky, remained in a state of absolute inaction; and Clairfait, with seventeen thousand on the right, who came up too late to take any active part in the engagement, was obliged to retire, after capturing seven pieces of cannon; a poor compensation for the total rout of the centre, and the moral disadvantages of a defeat. In this action, where the Allies lost three thousand men, and sixty pieces of cannon, the superiority of the French generalship was very apparent; inferior, upon the whole, to the number of their opponents, they had greatly the advantage in point of numbers at the point of attack; but after having pierced the centre, they should have reaped something more from their victory, than the bare possession of the field of battle (2).

May 22. On the 22d May, Pichegru, who now assumed the command,

(1) *Jom. v. 79, 83, 85. Toul. iv. 322. Th. vi. 292. Ann. Reg. 1794, 331.* (2) *Jom. v. 86, 97, 98. Toul. iv. 322. Ann. Reg. 1794, 322. Th. vi. 296, 296. Hard. ii. 536-7.*

renewed the attack, with a force now raised by successive additions to nearly 100,000 men, with the intention of forcing the passage of the Scheldt, besieging Tournay, and capturing a convoy which was ascending that river. They at first succeeded in driving in the outposts; but a reinforcement of English troops, commanded by General Fox, and seven Austrian battalions, having arrived to support the Hanoverians in that quarter, a desperate and bloody conflict ensued, in which the firmness of the English at length prevailed over the impetuosity of their adversaries, and the village of Pontachin, which was the point of contest between them, finally remained in their hands. The battle continued from five in the morning till nine at night, when it terminated by a general charge of the Allies, which drove the enemy from the field (1). In this battle, which was one of the most obstinately contested of the campaign, the French lost above six thousand men; but such was the fatigue of the victors, after an engagement of such severity and duration, that they were unable to follow up their success. Twenty thousand men had fallen on the two sides in these murderous battles, but no decisive advantage, and hardly a foot of ground been gained by either party (2).

Finding that he could make no impression in this quarter, Pichegru resolved to carry the theatre of war into West Flanders, where the country intersected by hedges, was less favourable to the Allied cavalry, and he, in consequence, laid siege to Ipres. About the same time, the Emperor conducted ten thousand men in person to reinforce the army on the Sambre, and the right wing of the Allies thus weakened, remained in a defensive position near Tournay, which was fortified with the utmost care (3).

The indecisive result of these bloody actions, which clearly demonstrated the great strength of the Republicans; and the desperate strife which awaited the allies, in any attempt to conquer a country abounding in such defenders, produced an important change in the Austrian councils. Thugut, who was essentially patriotic in his ideas, and reluctantly embarked in any contest which did not evidently conduct to the advantage of the hereditary states, had long nourished a secret aversion to the war in Flanders. He could not disguise from himself that the provinces, how opulent and important soever in themselves, contributed little to the real strength of the monarchy: that their situation, far removed from Austria, and close to France, rendered it highly probable, that they would, at some no very distant period, become the prey of that enterprising power; and that the charge of defending them at so great a distance from Vienna, entailed an enormous and ruinous expense upon the Imperial finances. Impressed with these ideas, he had for some time been revolving in his mind the project of abandoning these distant provinces to their fate, and looking out for a compensation to Austria in Italy or Bavaria, where its new acquisition might lie adjacent to the hereditary states. This long remained a fixed principle in the Imperial councils: and in these vague ideas is to be found the remote cause of the treaty of Campo-Formio, and partition of Venice (4).

May 24, 1794. Two days after the battle of Turcoing, a council of state was secretly held at the Imperial head-quarters, to deliberate on the measures to be

(1) The Emperor Francis was on horseback for twelve hours during this bloody day, incessantly traversing the ranks, and animating the soldiers to continue their exertions.—"Courage, my friends," said he, when they appeared about to sink, "yet a

few more exertions, and the victory is our own."—Hard. ii. 538.

(2) Ann. Reg. 1794. p. 333. Join. v. 98, 99—104. Th. vi. 297. Hard. ii. 537, 538.

(3) Join. v. 104. Toul. iv. 322.

(4) Hard. ii. 539, 540.

pursued for the future progress of the war. The opportunity appeared favourable to that able statesman to bring forward his favourite project. The inactivity and lukewarmness of the Prussians, notwithstanding the English subsidy, too plainly demonstrated that no reliance could be placed on their co-operation; the recent desperate actions in West Flanders sufficiently proved that no serious impression was to be made in that quarter; while the reluctance of the Flemish states to contribute any thing to the common cause, and the evident partiality of a large party amongst them for the French alliance, rendered it a matter of great doubt whether it was expedient for such distant, fickle, and disaffected subjects to maintain any longer a contest, which, if unsuccessful, might engulf half the forces of the monarchy. These considerations were forcibly impressed upon the mind of the young Emperor, who, born and bred in Tuscany, entertained no partiality for his distant Flemish possessions; Mack supported them with all the weight of his opinion, and strongly urged that it was better to retire altogether across the Rhine, while yet the strength of the army was unbroken, than run the risk of its being buried in the fields of Belgium. If Flanders was of such value to the cause of European independence, it lay upon England, Prussia, and Holland, in the centre of whose dominions it lay, to provide measures for its defence: but the real interests of Austria lay nearer home, and her battalions required to be seen in dense array on the maritime Alps, or on the shores of the Vistula, where vast and fertile provinces were about to fall a prey to her ambitious neighbours. Should affairs in that quarter assume a favourable aspect, and the revolutionary fervour of the Republic exhaust itself, it would apparently be no difficult matter to recover the Belgic provinces, as Dumouriez had done in the preceding campaign; or if this should unhappily prove impossible, it was much more likely that a successful defensive war could be maintained with the resources of the empire concentrated round its heart, than when they were so largely accumulated in a distant possession: or if peace became desirable, it could at any time be readily purchased by the cession of provinces so valuable to France, and the acquisition of an equivalent nearer the Austrian dominions (1).

The subject was debated with the deliberation which its importance deserved; and it was at length determined by the majority of the council, that the maintenance of so burdensome and hazardous a war for such disaffected and distinct possessions, was contrary to the vital interests of the state. It was resolved, accordingly, that the Imperial troops should, as soon as decency would permit, be withdrawn from Flanders; that this resolution should in the meantime be kept a profound secret, and to cover the honour of the Imperial arms, a general battle should be hazarded, and on its issue should depend the course which should thereafter be adopted; but that in the meantime the Emperor should forthwith depart for Vienna, to take cognizance of the affairs of Poland, which called for instant attention. In conformity with this resolution, he set out shortly after, leaving Cobourg in command of the army (2).

French  
again cross  
the Sambre.  
26th May.

Meanwhile, the Commissioners of the Convention, little anticipating the favourable turn which their affairs were about to take from the divisions of the Allies, nothing daunted by the reverses the army of the Sambre had experienced, were continually stimulating its ge-

(1) Hard. ii. 539—543.

(2) Hard. ii. 543, 545.

nerals to fresh exertions. In vain they represented, that the soldiers, worn out with fatigue, without shoes, without clothing, stood much in need of repose; "To-morrow," said St.-Just, "the Republic must have a victory; choose between a battle and a siege." Constrained by authorities who enforced their arguments with the guillotine, the Republican generals prepared for a third expedition across the Sambre. Towards the end of May, Kléber made the attempt with troops still exhausted by fatigue, and almost starving; the consequences were such as might have been expected; the grenadiers were repulsed, by the grape-shot of the enemy, and General Duhesme was routed with little difficulty. On the 29th, however, the indomitable Republicans returned to the charge, and after an obstinate engagement, succeeded in forcing back the Imperialists, and immediately formed the investment of

Invest Char-  
leroi, and are  
driven back.  
June 3.

Charleroi. But the arrival of the Emperor with ten thousand troops, having raised the Allied Force in that quarter to thirty-five thousand men, it was resolved to make an effort to raise the siege before Jourdan arrived with the army of the Moselle, who was hourly expected. The attack was made on the 3d June, and attended with complete success; the French having been driven across the Sambre, with the loss of two thousand men. But this check was of little importance; on the day following Jourdan arrived from the Moselle with forty thousand fresh troops (1).

Arrival of  
Jourdan  
with 40,000  
men.  
13th June. This great reinforcement thrown into the scale, when the con-  
tending parties were so nearly balanced, was decisive of the fate of  
the campaign, and proves the sagacity with which Carnot acted in  
accumulating an overwhelming force on this point. In a few days the Re-  
publicans recrossed the river with sixty thousand men; resumed the siege of  
Charleroi, and soon destroyed a strong redoubt which constituted the prin-  
cipal defence of the besieged. The imminent danger to which the city was  
reduced by the attack of this great force, induced the Allies to make the ut-  
most efforts to raise the siege. But this required no less skill than

6th June. intrepidity, for their army did not exceed thirty-five thousand men, while  
the French were nearly double that number. On this occasion, the system of  
attack by detached columns, was successful; the Republicans were pierced  
by a concentric effort of two of their columns, defeated, and driven over the  
Sambre, with the loss of three thousand men. This success, highly honour-  
able as it was to the Austrian arms, proved in the end prejudicial to their  
cause, as it induced Prince Cobourg to suppose that his left wing was now  
sufficiently secure, and to detach all his disposable troops to the succour of  
Clairfait and Ipres on the right, whereas it was against the other flank that  
the principal forces of the Republicans were now directed (2).

Sambre  
again cross-  
ed and  
Charleroi  
reinvested. In effect, on the 18th June, the French army recrossed the Sambre  
for the fifth, and commenced the bombardment of Charleroi for  
the third time. The great force with which this attack was made  
amounting to seventy thousand men, rendered it evident that Prince Cobourg  
had mistaken the point which required support, and that it was on the Sam-  
bre, and under the walls of Charleroi, that the decisive battle for the protec-  
tion of Flanders was to be fought. Accordingly, the major part of the Allied  
Forces were at length moved in that direction; the Duke of York, with the  
English and Hanoverians, being left alone on the Scheldt, at a short distance

(1) Toul. iv. 322. Jom. v. 103, 109, 113.

(2) Jom. v. 132. Th. vi. 395. Ann. Reg. 1794,  
333.

Separation  
of the Aus-  
trians and  
English.

from Clairfait, who had recently experienced the most overwhelming reverses. This separation of the forces of the two nations, contributed not a little to augment the misunderstanding which already prevailed between them, and was the forerunner of numberless disasters to both monarchies (1).

Pichegru  
attacks  
Clairfait.

No sooner was the departure of the Emperor with reinforcements to the army on the Sambre known to Pichegru, than he resolved to take advantage of the weakness of his adversaries, by prosecuting seriously the long menaced siege of Ipres. Clairfait not feeling himself in sufficient strength to interrupt his operations, remained firm in his intrenched camp at Thielt. An attempted movement of the centre of the Allied Army to his support, having been betrayed to the enemy at Lille, was prevented from being carried into effect by a demonstration from the French centre by Pichegru. The consequence was, that the Austrian general was compelled to attack alone, and though his corps fought with their wonted valour he was again worsted, and compelled to resume his position in his intrenchments, without having disturbed the operations of the siege. This was the 17th June. fifth time that this brave officer had fought alone, while thirty thousand Austrians lay inactive at Tournay, and six thousand English were reposing from the fatigues of their sea voyage at Ostend. The consequence was, that Ipres capitulated a few days after, and its garrison, consisting of six thousand men, were made prisoners of war. Cobourg made a tardy movement for its relief, but hearing of its fall, returned on the 19th to Tournay (2).

The Austrians having now, in pursuance of their plan of withdrawing from Flanders, finally detached themselves from the English, moved all their forces towards their left wing, with a view to succour Charleroi, which

22d June.  
Imperialists  
assemble to  
succour  
Charleroi.

was severely pressed by Jourdan. On the 22d Prince Cobourg joined his left wing, but though their united forces were seventy-five thousand strong, he delayed till the 26th to attack the French army. Jourdan, who was fully aware of the importance of acquiring this fortress, took advantage of the respite which this delay afforded him to prosecute

the siege with the utmost activity. This he did with such success, that the batteries of the besieged having been silenced, the place capitulated on the evening of the 25th. Hardly had the garrison left the gates, when the discharge of artillery announced the tardy movement of the Austrians for its relief. The battle took place on the following day, on the plains of FLEURUS, already signalized by a victory of Marshal Luxembourg in 1690, and was one of the most important of the whole war (3).

The French army, which was eighty-nine thousand strong, was posted in a semicircle round the town of Charleroi, now become, instead of a source of weakness, a *point d'appui* to the Republicans. Their position very nearly resembled that of Napoléon at Leipsic; but the superiority of force, on that occasion, secured a very different result to the Allies from that which now awaited their arms. The Imperialists, adhering to their system of attacking the enemy at all points, divided their forces into five columns, intending to assail at the same moment all parts of the Republican

Battle of  
Fleurus.

(1) Jom. v. 133. Th. vi. 397. Ann. Reg. 1794, 333.

(3) Jom. v. 137. Ann. Reg. 1794, 334. Th. vi. 395, 396.

(2) Ann. Reg. 1794, p. 334. Jom. v. 119, 121, 134. Th. vi. 393, 394.



position; a mode of attack at all times hazardous, but especially so when an inferior is engaged with a superior force. The battle commenced on the 26th, at daybreak, and continued with great vigour throughout the whole day (1).

The first column, under the command of the Prince of Orange, attacked the left of the French under General Montaigu, and drove them back to the village of Fontaine-l'Évêque; but the Republicans being there reinforced by fresh troops, succeeded in maintaining their ground, and repulsed the repeated charges of the Imperial cavalry. During a successful charge, however, the French horse were themselves assailed by the Austrian cuirassiers, and driven back in confusion upon the infantry, who gradually lost ground, and at length were compelled to fall back to the heights in front of Charleroi. The moment was critical, for the Austrians were on the point of carrying the village of Marchiennes-au-Pont, which would have intercepted the whole communications of the Republican army; but Jourdan, alarmed at the advance of the enemy in this quarter, moved up Kléber to support his left. That intrepid general hastily erected several batteries to meet the enemy's fire, and moved forward BERNADOTTE at the head of several battalions to the support of Montaigu. The Allies, under Latour and the Prince of Orange, being unsupported by the remainder of the army, and finding themselves vigorously assailed both in front and flank, fell back from their advanced position, and before four in the afternoon, all the ground gained in that quarter had been abandoned (2).

While these events were going forward on the left, the centre, where the village of Fleurus was occupied by sixteen thousand troops, and strongly strengthened by intrenchments, was the scene of an obstinate conflict. The attack in front of the Allies was successfully repulsed after passing the village, by the fire of artillery on the heights in the rear; but General Beaulieu, with the left wing of the allies, having attacked and carried the post of Lambusart on the French right, the Republicans on the left were compelled to give way; and the important post of Fleurus, with its great redoubt, stood prominent in the midst of the Allied Forces, exposed to attack both in front and flank. The consequence of this was, that the great redoubt was on the point of being taken, and the French divisions in the centre were already in full retreat, when Jourdan hastened to the scene of danger with six battalions, who were formed in close columns, and checked the advance of the enemy. The French cavalry, under Dubois, made a furious charge upon the Imperial infantry, overthrew them, and captured fifty pieces of cannon: but being disordered by their rapid advance, they were immediately after attacked by the Austrian cuirassiers, who not only routed the victors, but retook the whole artillery, and drove them back in confusion upon their own lines (3).

Meanwhile the Allied left, under Beaulieu, made the most brilliant progress. After various attacks, the village of Lambusart was carried, and the enemy's forces, for the most part, driven across the Sambre; but the vigorous fire of the French artillery prevented the Allies from debouching from the village, or obtaining complete success in that quarter. As it was, however, the situation of the Republicans was disadvantageous in every quarter. The right, under Moreau, was driven back, and in great part had recrossed the

(1) Jom. v. 138. Th. vi. 399, 400. Toul. iv. 328.

(3) Jom. v. 145, 146, 149. Toul. iv. 332. Th. vi.

(2) Jom. v. 143. Toul. iv. 329, 330. Th. vi. 399, 401.

river; the left, under Montaignu, had abandoned the field of battle, and almost entirely gone over to the other bank; while the forces in the centre had been in part compelled to recede, and the great redoubt was in danger of being carried. Four divisions only, those of Lefebvre, Champignnet, Kléber, and Daurier, were in a condition to make head against the enemy; when Cobourg, hearing of the fall of Charleroi, ordered a retreat at all points. Without detracting from the merit of Jourdan, it may safely be affirmed, that if the Prince of Orange, instead of drawing back his wing, when he found it too far advanced, had united with the centre to attack Fleurus, and the main body of the French army, while Beaulieu pressed them on the other side, the success would have been rendered complete, and a glorious victory achieved (1).

But nothing is so perilous as to evince any symptoms of vacillation after a general engagement. The battle of Fleurus was, in fact, a drawn battle; the loss on both sides was nearly equal, being between four thousand and five thousand men to each side; the French had given way on both wings, the centre with difficulty maintained its ground, and the Imperialists only retreated because the fall of Charleroi had removed the object for which they fought; and the secret instructions of their general precluded him from adopting any course, how brilliant and inviting soever, which promised to be attended with any hazard to the army: nevertheless, it was attended with the most disastrous consequences. The loss of Flanders immediately followed a contest which an enterprising general would have converted into a triumph (2).

Cobourg retired to Nivelles, and soon after took post at Mont St.-Jean and Waterloo, at the entrance of the Forest of Soignies, little dreaming of the glorious event which, under a firmer commander, and with the forces of a very differently united alliance, were there destined to counterbalance all the evils of which his indecision formed the commencement. Two days afterwards, the French issued from their intrenchments round Charleroi, and defeated the Allied rearguard at Mont Paliul, which fell back to Braine-le-Comte. Mons was shortly after evacuated, and the Allies, abandoning the whole fortresses which they had conquered, to their own resources, concentrated in front of Brussels. Several actions took place in the beginning of July, between the July 6 and 7. rearguard of the Allies and the French columns at Mont St.-Jean, Braine-la-Leude, and Sambre; but, at length, finding himself unable to maintain his position without concentrating his forces, Prince Cobourg abandoned Brussels, and fell back behind the Dyle (3).

It was not without the most strenuous exertions of the British Government to prevent them that these ruinous divisions broke out among the Allied Powers in Flanders. Immediately after the treaty of 19th April was signed, Lord Malmesbury, the English ambassador, set out from the Hague for Maastricht, where conferences were opened with the Prussian minister Haugwitz, and the Dutch plenipotentiaries. Their object was to induce the Prussian forces to leave the banks of the Rhine, and hasten to the scene of decisive operations in Flanders. These requisitions were so reasonable, and so strictly in unison with the letter as well as spirit of the recent treaty, that the Prussian minister could not avoid agreeing to them, and engaged to procure or-

(1) Jom. v. 150, 152, Th. vi. 401, 402. Toul. iv. 332.

(2) Hard. iii. 23, 24. Jom. v. 152. Th. vi. 406.

(3) Jom. v. 152, 162. Toul. iv. 336.

ders from the cabinet of Berlin to that effect. But Moellendorf, acting in obedience to secret orders from his court, declined to obey the requisition of the plenipotentiaries, and engaged in a fruitless and feigned expedition towards Kayerslautern and Sarre-Louis, at the very time that he was well aware Jourdan, with forty thousand men, was hastening by forced marches to the decisive point on the banks of the Sambre (1).

When the danger became more threatening, and the Emperor himself had hastened to the neighbourhood of Charleroi to make head against the accumulating masses of the Republicans, the same requisitions were renewed in a still more pressing strain by the English and Dutch ministers (2). But it was all in vain. The Prussian general betook himself to one subterfuge after another, alleging, that, by menacing Sarre-Louis and Landau, he succoured the common cause more effectually, than if he brought his whole forces to the walls of Charleroi, and at length peremptorily refused to leave the banks of the Rhine. The ministers of the maritime powers upon this broke out into bitter complaints at the breach of faith on the part of the Prussian government, and reproached the marshal with a fact which they had recently discovered, that, instead of sixty-two thousand men stipulated by the treaty, and paid for by the Allies, only thirty-two thousand received daily rations at the army. Moellendorf denied the charge; recriminations ensued on both sides, and at length they separated mutually exasperated; and Lord Cornwallis declared he would suspend the payment of the British subsidy (3).

After the departure of Cobourg from Tournay, the Allies strove in vain to contend with the superiority of the Republicans in maritime Flanders. Tournay was evacuated, and while Pichegru himself marched upon Ghent to force back Clairfait, he detached Moreau with a considerable force to form the siege of the places bordering on the ocean. Nieuport capitulated, Fort Ecluse, the key of the Scheldt, was blockaded, and the island of Cadsand overrun by the Republicans, who crossed the arm of the sea which separated it from the mainland by swimming. Clairfait, although reinforced

Pichegru drives back Clairfait in West Flanders.

by six thousand English, who had marched from Ostend, under Lord Moira, found himself unable to make head against Pichegru; the old German tactics of carrying on war by a series of positions, which succeeded against the inconsiderable forces of Prussia, even when guided by the genius of Frederic, totally failed when opposed to the vehement ardour

July 7. and inexhaustible numbers of the Revolutionary armies. After in vain attempting, in conjunction with Cobourg, to cover Brussels, he was compelled to fall back behind the Dyle; while the Duke of York also retired in the same direction, and encamped between Malines and Louvain (4).

July 20. The retreat of the Allied Forces enabled the victorious armies of Pichegru and Jourdan to unite their forces at Brussels, where they met on the 10th July. And thus, by a series of energetic movements and glorious contests, were two armies, which a short time before had left the extremities of the vast line extending from Philippeville to Dunkirk, enabled to unite their victorious forces for the occupation of the capital of Flanders (5).

(1) Hard. ii. 545, 547.

(2) "It is not for nothing," said Lord Cornwallis, and Kinckel, the Dutch minister, "that we pay you our subsidies, nor in order that the subsidized power should employ the paid forces for their own purposes. If the Prussian troops do not act for the

common cause, they depart from the chief object of the treaty."—Hard. iii. 65.

(3) Hard. iii. 5, 6, 7.

(4) Jom. v. 155, 162. Th. vi. 406. Toul. iv. 334, 335.

(5) Jom. v. 162.

The Austrian cabinet at this period entertained serious thoughts of peace. The opinion was very general on the continent, that the fearful energy and bloody proscriptions of Robespierre had considerably calmed the effervescence of the Revolution, and that his stern and relentless hand was alone adequate to restrain its excesses and restore any thing like a regular government at Paris. These ideas received a strong confirmation from the speech which he delivered on occasion of the fête of the Supreme Being; it was known that he had moderated many of the energetic plans of foreign invasion projected by Carnot, and that his brother had used his influence to preserve Piedmont and the north of Italy from an incursion, at a time when the Allies were little in a condition to have resisted it. The Imperial government was really desirous of an accommodation, in order to concentrate their armies and attention upon Poland, which was hourly approaching the crisis of its fate; and a large force had already entered Galicia, where they professed their intention of coming as deliverers, and were received with open arms by the people of that province. Unable to bear, any more than Prussia, the weight of a double contest on the Rhine and the Vistula, and, deeming the latter more material to the interests of the monarchy than the former, they had definitively determined at Vienna on the abandonment of the Belgian provinces, and were now only desirous of extricating themselves from a contest in which neither honour nor profit was to be gained. A secret understanding in consequence took place between Cobourg and the French generals, the conditions of which were, that the Austrians should not be disquieted in their retreat to the Rhine, and the Republicans permitted, without molestation, to reduce the four great fortresses which they had wrested from the Republic in the preceding and present campaign. The fall of Robespierre prevented these overtures from coming to any farther issue; but they early attracted the attention of the vigilant minister who directed the affairs of Great-Britain, and he urged his ambassador to make the strongest remonstrances against a step so prejudicial to the interests of Europe. But the Austrians were resolute in their determination to abandon Flanders, alleging as a reason the inconstancy and disaffection of its inhabitants. "To behold a people so infatuated," said Count Metternich to Lord Cornwallis, "as, notwithstanding the most pressing exhortations to take up arms in defence of their religion, their independence and property, refuse to move, and voluntarily place their necks under the yoke, singing Ça Ira, was a phenomenon reserved for these days of desolation (1)."

The English forces were now posted behind the Canal of Malines, and they amounted to above thirty thousand British and Hanoverians, and fifteen thousand Dutch. Their object was, by remaining on the defensive, to cover Antwerp and Holland, while the Austrians retired by Tirlemont upon Liege. In this way, while the Republicans remained with the centre at Brussels, and their wings extending from Wilworde to Namur, their adversaries retired by *diverging* lines towards the north and the south, and every successive day's march carried them farther from each other; a state of affairs, of all others

English retire  
towards Hol-  
land.

the most calamitous, in presence of an enterprising enemy. The English were intent only on covering Antwerp and Holland; the Imperialists on drawing nearer to their resources at Cologne and Coblenz; neither recollected, that by separating their forces, they gave the enemy the

(1) Hard. iii. 7, 33.

means of crushing either, separately, at pleasure, and left him in possession of a salient position (1), which would soon render both the provinces of the Lower-Rhine and the United-States untenable.

Inactivity of the French. Contrary to all expectation, and in opposition to what might have been expected from the previous energy of their measures, the Committee of Public Safety arrested their army in the career of victory, and paralysed 150,000 men in possession of an internal line of communication, at the moment when their enemies were disunited and incapable of rendering each other any assistance. This was the result of the secret understanding with Prince Cobourg, which has just been mentioned. On the 15th July, the Canal of Malines was forced after an inconsiderable resistance by the Dutch troops, and the Duke of York retired to Antwerp, which was soon after evacuated, and his whole forces concentrated towards Breda for the defence of Holland. On the other wing, Jourdan pursued his advantages against Cobourg; and after several inconsiderable engagements with the rearguard, Liege and Tongres were evacuated, and the Austrians retired behind the Meuse. But with these exceptions nothing was attempted by the Republicans for several weeks, while the Government waited the reduction of Valenciennes and the other places captured by the Allies on the frontier at the commencement of the war (2).

Decree of the Convention to give no quarter. To hasten their reduction, a bloody decree was passed by the Convention, ordaining their commanders to give no quarter to any garrison which should not surrender within twenty-four hours after the first summons. The humanity of the Republican generals refused to carry this atrocious decree into execution, and it was soon after rendered nugatory by the fall of Robespierre on the 28th July (9th Thermidor). The governor of Condé, when summoned to surrender in virtue of this atrocious decree, replied, "That one nation had no right to decree the dishonour of another nation;" and the Committee of Public Safety, under Carnot's direction, feeling the iniquity of the measure, took advantage of fictitious delays to allow the garrisons to capitulate on the usual terms. General Scherer collected a body of troops from the interior and the neighbouring garrisons, and formed the siege successively of Landrecies, Le Quesnoy, Condé, and Valenciennes, all of which fell, after a trifling resistance, before the end of August (3).

May 30. At the same time a decree was passed by the Convention, prohibiting their armies from giving quarter to the English who might fall into their hands. "Republican soldiers," said Barrère, "you must, when victory shall put into your power either English or Hanoverians, strike without mercy; not one of them ought to return to the traitorous territory of England, or to be brought into France. Let the English slaves perish, but let Europe be free." To this decree the Duke of York replied, by an order of the day, ordering all French captives to be treated with the same humanity as before (4). This

(1) *Jom. v. 162, 165. Toul. iv. 338.*

(2) *Toul. iv. 338. Jom. v. 170, 172, 174.*

(3) *Toul. iv. 338. Jom. v. 172. Th. vi. 74.*

(4) He stated in that noble document, "The National Convention has just passed a decree that their soldiers shall give no quarter to the British or Hanoverian troops. His Royal Highness anticipates the indignation and horror which has naturally arisen in the minds of the brave troops whom he addresses upon receiving this information. He desires, however, to remind them, that mercy to the vanquished is the brightest gem in a soldier's cha-

raeter, and exhorts them not to suffer their resentment to lead them to any precipitate act of cruelty on their part which may sully the reputation they have acquired in the world. In all the wars which, from the earliest times, have existed between the English and French nations, they have been accustomed to consider each other in the light of generous as well as brave enemies; while the Hanoverians, the allies of the former, have shared for above a century in this mutual esteem. Humanity and kindness have at all times taken place, the instant that opposition ceased, and the same cloak has been

generous conduct had the desired effect; the humane efforts of the English commanders were seconded by the corresponding feelings of the French officers, and the prisoners on both sides were treated with the same humanity as before the issuing of the bloody decree (1).

**Operations on the Rhine.** While the fortune of war, after a desperate struggle, was thus decisively inclining to the Republican side, on the northern, events of minor importance, but still upon the whole favourable to the French arms, occurred on the eastern and southern frontier. The dubious conduct, or rather evident defection of Prussia, paralysed all the operations on the Rhine. Sixty thousand Prussians and Saxons were assembled round Mayence, and along the Nahe; and the departure of Jourdan, with forty thousand, to reinforce the army on the Sambre, offered the fairest opportunity of resuming offensive operations with a preponderating force on the Moselle. Only two divisions at a distance from each other remained between Thionville and Kaiserslautern; and though the government made the greatest exertions to reinforce them, the utmost that could be done was to raise the one to twenty, and the other to ten thousand men. Nor was the superiority less decisive on the Upper-Rhine, where fifty thousand Imperialists formed the cordon from Bâle to Mayence; and seventy thousand more were prepared for active operations, while the force in the field, under General Michaud, to oppose them, was only thirty-six thousand, supported by fifty thousand still retained in garrison, by the cautious policy of the French government. Yet, with this immense superiority of force, the allies did nothing. Instead of assembling,

**Inactivity of the Prussians.** as they might easily have done, eighty thousand men, to attack the centre of the French lines on the Rhine, and relieve the pressure which operated so severely on the Sambre, they contented themselves with detaching a small force to dislodge the Republican post at Morlautern. A slight advantage was gained at Kaiserslautern over the Republican division 23d May, 1794. intrusted with the defence of the gorges; and General Michaud, unable to make head against such superior forces, retired to the intrenchments of the Queich, while the army of the Moselle resumed the positions it had occupied at the close of the preceding campaign. Shortly after Michaud received powerful reinforcements, and made vigorous preparations for resuming the offensive; while the British ambassador made vain attempts to stimulate the King of Prussia to execute the part assigned him in the treaty of the Hague. The whole attention of Prussia was fixed on Poland, and the movements of General Kosciuszko; and nothing could induce its government to give any directions for the prosecution of the war on the Rhine, till after the fall of Charleroi, the battle of Fleurus, and the reinforcement of the Republican armies on the Rhine, had rendered it impossible to resume the offensive with any prospect of advantage (2).

**Operations in Piedmont.** In the south, the reduction of Lyon and Toulon, by rendering disposable the forces employed in the siege of these cities, gave an early and decisive superiority to the Republican arms. The levies ordered in

frequently seen covering those who were wounded, friends and enemies, while indiscriminately conveyed to the hospitals of the conquerors. The British and Hanoverian armies will not believe that the French nation, even under their present infatuation, can so far forget their character as soldiers, as to pay any attention to a decree as injurious to themselves as it is disgraceful to their government; and therefore his Royal Highness trusts that the soldiers

of both nations will confine their sentiments of abhorrence to the National Convention alone, persuaded that they will be joined in them by every Frenchman who possesses one spark of honour, or one principle of a soldier."—Ann. Reg. 1794. *State Papers*, p. 169.

(1) Ann. Reg. 1794, 145. Th. vii. 74.

(2) Jom. v. 177, 188. St.-Cyr, li. 232, 236.

September, 1793, had brought such an accession of strength to their forces, that in the middle of April the army of the Alps amounted to seventy-five thousand combatants. Piedmont, menaced with invasion by this formidable force, had only at its command a body of forty thousand men, spread over a chain of posts along the summit of the Alps, from Savona to Mont-Blanc, and an auxiliary Austrian force, ten thousand strong, in the interior. The great superiority of the French forces would have enabled them to have instantly commenced the invasion of Italy; but pressed in other quarters, the Committee of Public Safety, under the directions of Robespierre, contented themselves with enjoining their commanders to drive the enemy over the Alps, and get possession of all the passes, leaving to a future year the long-wished for irruption into the Italian provinces (1).

Mont-Cenis is carried by the French. The first operations of the Republicans were not successful. General Sarret, with a detachment of two thousand men, was repulsed at the Little St.-Bernard, while the column destined for the attack of the Mont-Cenis was also unsuccessful. Far from being discouraged with these trifling reverses, General Dumas returned to the charge with more considerable forces, and on the 23d April, after a vigorous resistance, made himself master of the first pass, which was followed on the 14th May by the capture of the second. The loss of Mont-Cenis cost the Sardinians six hundred prisoners, and twenty pieces of cannon. By these successes the whole ridge of the Alps, separating Piedmont from Savoy, fell into the possession of the Republican generals; and the keys of Italy were placed in the hands of the French government (2).

Great successes of Napoleon and Masséna in the Maritime Alps. Nor were the operations of the Republicans less successful on the frontiers of Nice. The counsels of the leaders were there directed by General Bonaparte, whose extraordinary military abilities had already given him an ascendancy far beyond his rank. His design was to turn Saorgio by its left, and cut off the retreat of its garrison, by the great road from over the Col di Tende. The attacking force was divided into three columns. The first, twenty thousand strong, commanded by Masséna, broke up on the first April, with twenty pieces of cannon to pass between Saorgio and the sea; the second, composed of ten thousand men, under the immediate directions of Dumberion, remained in front of the enemy, while the third, of equal force, was destined to gain the upper extremity of the valleys of the Vesubia, and communicate with the army of Savoy by Isola (3).

In the course of his march, Masséna traversed the neutral territory of Genoa, and after a hardy march as far as Gareggio, found himself considerably in advance of the main body of the enemy, posted in intrenched camps on the western side of the mountains. Guided by the intrepid Col Rusca, an ardent chasseur, and well acquainted with these Alpine ridges, he boldly pursued his successes, and by a skilful combination of all his force, succeeded in storming the redoubts of the Col Ardente. In vain the Piedmontese received the assailants with a shower of stones and balls; nothing could withstand the impetuosity of the Republicans, and Masséna pursuing his successes, reached Tanardo, and the heights which commanded the pass of the Briga. Rusca, familiar with the country, vehemently urged his commander to direct some battalions to descend to the Convent of St.-Dalmazia, seize the great road,

(1) *Jom. v. 194, 196. Bot. i. 185, 193.*

(2) *Jom. v. 199, 201. Bot. i. 193—196.*

(3) *Jom. v. 204.*

destroy the bridges, and cut off the retreat of the great body of the enemy posted at the camp at Rauss; but this appeared too hazardous a measure to Masséna, who preferred the certain advantage of compelling the evacuation of Saorgio, without risk, to the perilous attempt of compelling a force nearly equal to his own to surrender. Meanwhile, the attack of the centre, under Dumerbion, had been attended with equal success; and the Sardinian forces, pressed in front, and menaced in rear, evacuated the famous camp of Rauss, and fell back towards the Col-di-Tende. Dumerbion's leading columns approached the fort of Saorgio, at the same time that Masséna's forces appeared on the heights immediately overhanging it behind; and this celebrated post, almost impregnable in front, but destitute of any defence against the forces of the Republicans, now perched on the rocks in its rear, surrendered at the first summons (1).

The Sardinians are driven over the ridge of the Alps. Meanwhile, the French left successfully ascended the Vesubia, and after a vehement resistance, the winding rocky road, between Figaretto and Lantosca was stormed, and the Allies driven back to the Col-de-Finisterre, while General Serrurier cleared the valley of the Tinea, and established a communication by Isola with the army of Savoy. To reap the fruit of so many successes, Dumerbion ordered Garnier to seize the Col-de-Finisterre, while his own centre drove the enemy from the Col-di-Tende. Both operations were successful; the Col-de-Finisterre fell after hardly any resistance; and although the Col-di-Tende was more bravely contested, the unexpected appearance of a division of French on their left spread a panic among the Piedmontese troops, which speedily led to the evacuation of the position. Thus, the Republicans, before the end of May, were masters of all the passes through the maritime Alps; and while, from the summit of Mont-Cenis, they threatened a descent upon the valley of Susa, and the capital, from the Col-di-Tende, they could advance straight to the siege of the important fortress of Coni (2).

Napoléon, whose prophetic eye already anticipated the triumphs of 1796, in vain urged the government to unite the victorious armies in the valley of the Stura, and push on immediately with their combined strength to the conquest of Italy. The reverse at Kayerslautern induced them to withdraw ten thousand men from the army of the Alps to support the troops on the Rhine; and Dumerbion, satisfied with the laurels he had won, and with energies enfeebled by years, could not be induced to risk ulterior operations. After so brilliant a *début*, the Republican forces failed even in reducing the little fort of Exiles, on the eastern descent of Mont-Cenis; and for the three summer months, the victorious troops reposed from their fatigues on the heights which they had won above the clouds (3).

War in the Eastern Pyrenees. On the frontiers of Spain, the war assumed still more decisive features. The reduction of Toulon enabled the central government to detach General Dugommier with half the forces employed in its siege, to reinforce the army on the eastern Pyrenees; and it was resolved to act offensively at both extremities of that range of mountains. During the winter months incessant exertions were made to recruit the armies, which the immense levies of the Republic enabled the southern departments to do to such a degree, that at the opening of the campaign, notwithstanding their reverses, they

(1) Botto, i. 184, 190. Jom. v. 209, 210. Th. vi. 283.

(2) Jom. v. 211, 213. Bot. i. 186, 188, 190. Th. vi. 282.

(3) Bot. i. 187. Jom. v. 214.



were greatly superior in number to their opponents; while the Spanish government, destitute of energy, and exhausted by the exertions they had already made, were unable to maintain their forces at the former complement. Before the end of the year 1793, they were reduced to the necessity of issuing above L.12,000,000 sterling of paper money, secured on the produce of the tobacco tax; but all their efforts to recruit their armies from the natives of the country having proved ineffectual, they were compelled to take the foreigners employed at the siege of Toulon into their service, and augment the number of their mercenary troops. Every thing on the Republican side indicated the energy and resolution of a rising, every thing on the Spanish, the decrepitude and vacillation of a declining state. Between such powers, victory could not long remain doubtful (4).

Dugommier, on his arrival at the end of December, found the army of the Eastern Pyrenees raised by his junction to thirty-five thousand men, encamped under the cannon of Perpignan; a large proportion of the troops were in hospital, and the remainder in a state of insubordination and defection, which seemed to promise the most disastrous results. By entirely reorganizing the regiments, appointing new officers in the staff, and communicating to all the vigour of his own character, he succeeded in a few months not only in restoring its efficiency, but leading it to the most glorious successes. The Spanish army, recently so triumphant, had proportionally declined; above ten thousand men were in hospital, the expected reinforcements had not arrived, and the force in the field did not exceed twenty-five thousand effective troops. Before the end of February, the French force was augmented to sixty-five thousand men, of whom thirty-five thousand were in a condition immediately to commence operations (2).

On the 27th March, the Republicans broke up and drew near to the Spanish position. A redoubt on the Spanish left was taken a few days after the campaign opened, and General Dagobert was carried off by the malignant fever, which had already made such ravages in both armies. The Marquis Amarillas upon that drew back all his forces into the intrenched camp at Boulon. He was shortly after succeeded in the command by La Union, who immediately transferred the head-quarters to Ceret, a good position for an attacking, but defective for a defending army. They were there assailed on the 30th April

April 30. by the whole French force; and one of the redoubts in the centre of the Spanish position having been stormed, the whole army fell back in

May 1. confusion, which was increased into a total rout on the following day, by the Republican troops having made themselves masters of the road

to Bellegarde, the principal line of their communication over the mountains into their own country. Finding themselves cut off from

this route, the Spaniards were seized with one of those panics so common to their troops in the Peninsular war; the whole army fled in confusion over the hills, and could be rallied only under the cannon of Figueras, leaving one hundred and forty pieces of cannon, fifteen hundred prisoners, eight hundred mules, and all their baggage and ammunition to the victors, whose loss did not amount to one thousand men (3).

Dugommier immediately took advantage of his successes to undertake the

(1) *Jom. v. 218, 221. Toul. iv. 304. Th. vi. 278, 279.*

(2) *Jom. v. 222, 223, 224, 225. Th. vi. 278, Toul. iv. 305.*

(3) *Toul. iv. 305, 307. Jom. v. 235. Th. vi. 280.*

siege of the fortresses of which the Spaniards had possessed themselves on the French territory. Collioure and Bellegarde were besieged at the same time; and although the inconsiderate ardour of the Republicans exposed them to a severe check at Port-Vendré, the siege of Fort St.-Elmo was pressed with so much vigour, that the garrison, abandoned to its own resources, was compelled to evacuate the place, and retire to Collioure. Marshal Navarro, the Spanish commander, at the head of a garrison of seven thousand men, made a gallant defence; and the rocky nature of the ground exposed the besiegers to almost insurmountable difficulties (1); but the perseverance of the French engineers having transported artillery to places deemed inaccessible, the commander, after having made a vain attempt to escape by sea, which the tempestuous state of the weather rendered impracticable, laid down his arms, with his whole garrison.

At the other extremity of the Pyrenees, the French army, weakened by the detachment of considerable forces to Roussillon to repair the disasters of the preceding campaign, remained in the early part of the year on the defensive. The Republicans in that quarter did not amount to forty thousand men, of whom one-half were militia totally unfit to take the field. An attack by the Spaniards on the French intrenchments early in February having been repulsed, nothing was undertaken of importance in that quarter till the beginning of June, when the government, encouraged by the great advantages gained in Roussillon, resolved to invade the Peninsula at once, at both extremities of the Pyrenees, while the improved organization of the new levies around Bayonne afforded every prospect of success (2).

The invasion on the west took place by the valley of Bastan, the destined theatre of more memorable achievements between the armies of England and France. The Republicans were divided into three columns, which successively forced the Col-di-Maya and the valley of Roncesvalles. Some weeks afterwards, an attempt was made by the Spanish commander to regain the position which he had lost, but he was repulsed with the loss of eight hundred men, and soon after resigned the command of an army, which was daily increasing in disorder and demoralization. The Count Colomera, who succeeded to the command, was not more successful. He in vain endeavoured by proclamations to rouse the mountaineers of the Pyrenees to arms in their defence (3); the period was not arrived when the chord of religion was to vibrate through the Spanish heart.

Towards the end of July, the French drove the Spaniards out of the whole of the valley of Bastan, forced the heights of St.-Marcial, captured the intrenched camp and fortified posts on the Bidassoa, defended by two hundred pieces of cannon, and pushed on to Fontarabia, which surrendered on the first summons. Following up the career of success, they advanced to St.-Sebastian, and that important fortress, though garrisoned by seventeen hundred regular troops, capitulated without firing a shot. Colomera took post at Tolosa, to cover the roads leading to Pampe-luna and Madrid; but at the first appearance of the enemy the whole infantry took to flight, and left the cavalry alone to sustain the brunt of the enemy, which, by a gallant charge, succeeded in arresting the advance of the pursuers. By these successes the French were firmly posted in the Spanish territory, and their wants amply supplied from the great magazines and stores,

(1) Toul. iv. 308. Jom. v. 241, 243.

(2) Toul. iv. 309. Jom. v. 248, 251.

(3) Toul. iv. 310. Jom. v. 252, 255, and vi. 143.

both of ammunition and provisions, which fell into their hands in the fortified places on the frontier. The English historian, who recounts the facility with which these successes were achieved by the inexperienced troops of France, cannot help feeling a conscious pride at the recollection of the very different actions of which that country was afterwards the theatre, and at marking in the scenes of Spanish disgrace the destined theatre of British glory (1).

Siege and  
Capture of  
Bellegarde.

While these events were occurring in Biscay, successes still more decisive were gained on the eastern frontier. Twenty thousand of the Republicans were employed in the blockade of Bellegarde, and the Catalonians, always ready to take up arms when their hearths are threatened, turned out in great numbers to reinforce the army of La Union. After three months of incessant efforts, the Spanish commander deemed his troops sufficiently reinstated to resume the offensive, and attempt the relief of Bellegarde, which Sept. 12. was now reduced to the last extremity. The principal attack was made against the right wing of Dugommier, and if it had been assailed with sufficient force, the success of the Spaniards could hardly have been doubtful; but the columns of attack having been imprudently divided, the convoy destined to revictual the fortress never reached its destination; and General AUGEREAU, who commanded the right wing, though driven back to the camp of La Madeleine, succeeded in baffling the objects of the enemy. The consequence was, that the Spaniards, after having at first gained some advantages, were compelled to retreat, and Bellegarde, seeing no prospect of relief, capitulated a few days afterwards. The Spanish general excused himself for the bad success of his arms, by alleging the insubordination and misconduct of the troops. "Without," said he, in his report to government, "consideration, without obeying their chiefs or their officers, who did their utmost to retain them, the soldiers took to flight, after having for the most part thrown away their arms." A battalion was ordered to be decimated for its cowardice, and La Union, despairing of success, solicited his dismissal (2).

Discouraged by such repeated reverses, the Spanish government made proposals of peace; but the terms were deemed so inadmissible by the Committee of Public Safety, that they ordered Dugommier to give their answer from the cannon's mouth. In the meanwhile the Spanish commander had leisure to strengthen his position: Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, in two lines, arranged along a succession of heights nearly seven leagues in extent, presented a front of the most formidable kind, while a smaller intrenched camp in the rear, around Figueras, afforded a secure asylum in case of disaster. But the result proved how rare it is that a position of that description, how strong soever to appearance, is capable of arresting an enterprising and able assailant. The artillery perched upon eminences, produced but an inconsiderable effect, with its plunging shot, on the masses in the valleys beneath, while the difficulty of communication between the different parts of the line rendered a disaster in any quarter extremely probable, from the superior forces which the enemy could bring to bear upon one point, and if it occurred, hardly reparable (3).

Great De-  
feat of the  
Spaniards  
near Figue-  
ras.

On the night of the 16th November, the French attacking army, thirty thousand strong, was put in motion. It was divided into three columns. The right, under the command of Augereau, after

(1) Jom. v. 152.

(2) Toul. v. 30, 33. Jom. vi. 118, 123. Ib. vii. 92.

(3) Toul. v. 34. Jom. vi. 124, 125.

an arduous march of eighteen hours over rocks and precipices, drove the Spaniards, under General Courten, from the camp of La Madeleine, and made themselves masters of the whole intrenchments in that quarter; but the left, under General Lauret, was repulsed by the heavy fire from the batteries to which he was opposed, and when Dugommier was preparing to support him, he was killed by a shell from the central redoubts of the enemy. This unlooked-for disaster for a time paralysed the movements of the Republican army; but Pérignon having been invested with the command, moved a considerable force to the relief of Lauret, and with some difficulty extricated him from his perilous situation. But Augereau had vigorously followed up his successes. After giving his troops breath, he moved them to the centre, and forced the great redoubt (1), though bravely defended by twelve hundred men; the result of which was, that the Spaniards abandoned five other redoubts and almost all their artillery, and fell back to their intrenched camp in the neighbourhood of Figueras.

Nov. 19. Pérignon instantly prepared to follow up his successes. Wisely judging that the left was the weak point of the enemy's position, he reinforced Augereau in the night with two fresh brigades, and, on the morning of

Nov. 20. the 20th, moved all his forces to the attack. General Bon, intrusted with the conduct of the vanguard of the right wing, defiled over tracts hardly practicable for single passengers, and crossed the river Muga repeatedly, with the water up to the soldiers' middle. Arrived in presence of the redoubts, he ascended the mountain Escaulas, under a tremendous fire from the Spanish redoubts, and carried at the point of the bayonet the central intrenchment. La Union, hastening with the reserve to the redoubt of La Rosere, was killed on the spot; and that fort, regarded as impregnable, having been stormed, its whole defenders were put to the sword. These disasters discouraged the Spaniards along the whole line. Several other redoubts having been carried by the bayonet, the defenders evacuated the remainder, and blew them up. In a few minutes, twenty redoubts, constructed with infinite labour, were blown into the air; and the troops charged with their defence, flying in confusion to Figueras, overthrew a column of fresh troops advancing to their support, and rushed in utter confusion into the gates of the fortress.

Nov. 24. Such was the dismay of the Spaniards, that when the Republican outposts, a few days afterwards, approached Figueras, the garrison, consisting of above nine thousand men, amply provided with provisions and stores of every sort, laid down their arms; and the strongest place in Spain (2), amidst the general acclamation of the inhabitants, was delivered up to the invaders.

This unexpected conquest having made the French masters of the rich and fertile plain of Lampourdan, and of an ample supply of stores and artillery of every description, preparations were soon afterwards made for the siege of Rosas. The garrison consisted of nearly five thousand men, and the place in itself strong, as the glorious siege of 1809 demonstrated, was capable of being reinforced to any extent by sea. Nevertheless, such was the vigour of the Republicans, and the dejection of the Spaniards, that the assailants pushed the siege during the severest months of winter, without any molestation.

Feb. 3, 1795. The fort of Trinity was reduced on the 7th January; and the gar-

(1) Toul. v. 34. Jom. vi. 140. Th. vii. 200.

(2) Jom. vi. 133, 134. Toul. v. 35, 36. Th. vii. 200.

risson, threatened with an immediate assault by a practicable breach, retired by sea in the beginning of February, leaving the fortress to the enemy (1).

Nor was the fortune of war more favourable to the Spanish forces at the other extremity of the line. After the fall of St.-Sebastian, Colomera endeavoured without effect to rouse the population of the Pyrenean valleys, and the Republicans attempted to erect Biscay into a Republic, to be independent of the Spanish Crown. The usual fruits of democratic insurrection speedily appeared: The guillotine was erected at St.-Sebastian, and, in defiance of a solemn capitulation, the blood of the priests and the nobles was shed by the French commissioners, with as much inveteracy, as if Guipuzcoa had been la Vendée. Meanwhile disease made deeper ravages than the Spanish sword in the ranks of the invaders; in a short time above thirty thousand men perished in the hospitals. At length the Republican columns having been recruited by the never-failing levies in the interior, a general attack, late in autumn, was commenced on the Spanish positions. In the valley of Roncesvalles, their best division after a vigorous resistance, was routed with the loss of forty pieces of cannon and fifteen hundred prisoners, and a severe tempest of wind and rain alone prevented its total destruction. This success enabled the invaders to seize and burn the founderies of Orbaizita and d'Enguy, which had so long served for the supply of the Spanish marine; after which they retired to the neighbourhood of St.-Sebastian and Fontarabia, still occupying in force the valley of Bastan (4).

They sue  
for Peace.

These repeated disasters, and the evident disaffection of a considerable portion of their subjects, who were infected by the rage for democratical institutions, at length disposed the Spanish government to an accommodation. Nor were the Committee of Public Safety inclined to insist on rigorous conditions, as the liberation of two experienced and victorious armies promised to be of the utmost importance to the Republican arms, in the conquests which they meditated on the south of the Alps. With these dispositions on both sides, the work of negotiation was not difficult; and although the conclusion of the treaty was deferred to the succeeding year, no operations of importance were undertaken after this period. The severe winter of 1794-5, which gave the Republican troops the mastery of Holland, closed their operations on the snows of the Pyrenees (5).

The approach of winter, however, afforded no respite to the armies on the northern frontier. After a delay of two months, occasioned by the secret negotiations which the fall of Robespierre had broken off, the Republican armies recommenced those active operations, which their immense superiority of physical force speedily rendered decisive. The army of the North had seventy thousand effective men under its banners; that of the Sambre and Meuse, nominally 145,000 strong, presented an efficient force of 116,000 men; while the Duke of York, to cover the United-Provinces, had hardly fifty thousand; and General Clairfait, who had replaced Prince Cobourg, could only muster 100,000 to maintain the footing of the Imperialists in the Flemish provinces. But, considered morally, the inequality between the contending armies was still greater: On the one side was the triumph of victory, the vigour of democratic ambition, the ardour of patriotic

Renewal of  
Hostilities  
in Flanders.

(1) Jom. vi. 141. Toul. iv. 36.

(3) Jom. vi. 168. Toul. v. 221.

(2) Jom. vi. 154, 167. Th. vii. 199, 200. Toul. v. 218.

enthusiasm, the confidence of increasing numbers, and conscious ability; on the other, the dejection of defeat, the recrimination of commanders, the jealousies of nations, declining numbers, and an obstinate adherence to antiquated tactics (1).

All anxiety about their rear having been removed by the reduction of Condé, Valenciennes, Le Quesnoy, and Landrecies, the Republicans, in the end of August, resumed the offensive. The fort of Ecluse having surrendered to General Moreau, the Army of the North, reinforced by his division, commenced the invasion of Holland, while the States-General obstinately persisted in maintaining half their forces, amounting to twenty thousand men, in garrison in the interior, thirty leagues from the theatre of war, thereby leaving the protection of the frontier to the Sept. 15. inconsiderable force of the British commander. With little more than half the invader's force, the Duke of York was charged with the defence Sept. 18. of a frontier twenty leagues in extent (2). He first took up a defensive position behind the Aa, but his advanced-posts having been defeated by the French with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners, he was compelled to retire to the right bank of the Meuse, leaving the important places of Bergen-op-Zoom, Breda, and Bois-le-Duc, to their own resources.

Meanwhile, the army of the Sambre and Meuse, under Jourdan, made preparations for a general attack on the scattered forces of Clairfait. On the Sept. 18. 18th, the Republicans, divided into six columns, broke up, and a number of partial actions took place along the whole line; but the post of Ayvaile having been forced by the French, the Austrians fell back, with the loss of fifteen hundred men, and thirty-six pieces of cannon; and, after several ineffectual attempts to make a stand, finally evacuated their positions on the Meuse, and retired toward Rolduc and Aix-la-Chapelle. Jourdan immediately followed them; and while Kléber, with fifteen thousand men, formed the blockade of Maestricht, the General himself, with 100,000, pressed the discomfited forces of Clairfait, now hardly in a condition to keep the field, from the confusion and precipitance of their retreat. In vain the Austrians Oct. 2. took up a strong defensive position behind the Roer: On the 2d of October, the Republican columns were in motion at break of day, to assail their position, and for the first time since the Revolution, the splendid spectacle was exhibited of 100,000 men moving to the attack, with the precision and regularity of a field day. The Austrians occupied a series of heights behind the river, from whence their numerous artillery kept up a destructive plunging fire upon the advancing columns of the French; but nothing could arrest the enthusiasm of the Republicans. The French grenadiers, with Bernadotte at their head, plunged into the stream, and forced the Austrians to abandon the opposite heights, while General Scherer, on the other wing, also forced the passage of the river, and made himself master of Dueren. These disasters induced Clairfait, who still bravely maintained himself in the centre, to order a general retreat, which was effected before nightfall, with the loss of three thousand men; while that of the French did not amount to half the number (3).

This battle decided the fate of Flanders, and threw back the Imperial army Oct. 5. beyond the Rhine. The Austrians, in haste, crossed that river at

(1) Jom. vi. 15, 26. Th. vii. 76.

(2) Jom. vi. 22, 25. Toul. v. 66, 67. Th. vii. 77, 78. 84.

(3) Jom. vi. 32, 36, 46. Toul. v. 69. Th. vii. 79.

Mulheim, and Jourdan entered Cologne the day following, and soon afterwards extended his troops to Bonn. Soon after the siege of Maestricht was seriously undertaken, and such was the activity of the Committee of Public Safety, that a splendid siege equipage, of two hundred pieces, descended the Meuse, and speedily spread desolation through the city. A large cavern, discovered in the rock on which the fort of St.-Petre was situated, gave rise to a subterraneous warfare, in which the French soldiers, ever ready to adapt themselves to circumstances, speedily distinguished themselves. At length, on November 4, the garrison, despairing of being relieved, capitulated, on condition of not serving against the French till regularly exchanged; and this noble fortress, with three hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, fell into the hands of the Republicans. After this event, and the capture of the castle of Rheinfels, by the army of the Moselle, which shortly after took place, there remained nothing of all their vast possessions on the left of the Rhine, but Luxembourg and Mayence, in the hands of the Imperialists (1).

Nor were the operations of the left wing, destined for the invasion of Holland, less successful. After the retreat of the Duke of York, Pichegru, whose forces amounted to seventy thousand efficient troops, formed the siege of Bois-le-Duc, whose situation, situated at the confluence of three streams, was of importance as a base to their future operations. Both the States-General and the Duke of York had neglected to provide for the defence of this important fortress; its garrison was too weak either to man the works or undergo the fatigue of a siege; the fort of Creve-cœur surrendered almost at the first shot, and in a fortnight after the place capitulated, after a resistance disgraceful to the Dutch arms. After this success, the Duke of York distributed his troops along the line of the Waal, in hopes of being able to maintain a communication with the fortress of Grave, now threatened with a siege; but Pichegru, continuing his career of success, crossed the Meuse, and attacked the advanced posts of the Allies with so much vigour, that they were compelled to fall back, with considerable loss, across the Waal. After this check, the Duke of York stationed part of his troops in an intrenched camp, under the cannon of Nimeguen, and the remainder in a line around Thiel, and between the Waal and the Leck, communicating with the Dutch corps at Gorcum, in the hope of being permitted to remain there undisturbed during the winter. Meanwhile, Pichegru invested Grave and Venloo; the latter of which, though defended by a sufficient garrison of eighteen hundred men, and amply provided with artillery and ammunition, surrendered before the works were injured, from the mere annoyance of the enemy's musketry (2).

The successive intelligence of the defection of the Prussians, and the open abandonment of the Low-Countries by the Austrian forces, which exposed Holland and Hanover to the immediate invasion of the Republican forces, afforded the opposition in the English Parliament a favourable opportunity for renewing their attacks on the Government; and they triumphantly observed, that after twenty-seven months of bloodshed and combats, the Allies were reduced to the same situation in which they were when Dumouriez projected

(1) Jom. vi. 42, 45. Toul. v. 79. Th. vii. 85.

(2) Toul. v. 68, 72, 77, 78. Jom. vi. 47, 56. Th. vii. 86.

the invasion of Holland. But nothing could shake the firmness of Mr. Pitt. "It matters little," said he, "whether the disasters which have arisen are to be ascribed to the weakness of the generals, the intrigues of camps, or the jealousies of the cabinets; the fact is, that they exist, and that we must anew commence the salvation of Europe." In pursuance of this heroic resolution, Sir Arthur Paget was despatched to Berlin to endeavour to obtain some light on the ambiguous and suspicious conduct of that power, and Lord Spencer to Vienna, to endeavour to divert the Imperial Cabinet from their alarming intention of abandoning the Low-Countries (1).

As soon as Lord Spencer arrived at Vienna, he obtained a private audience of the Emperor, and laid before him the proposals of the English government, which were no less than the offer of an annual subsidy of three millions sterling, provided the Imperialists would renew the war in Flanders, and place the command of the army to the Archduke Charles, with Clairfait, Beaulieu, and Mack for his council. At the same time they stated such facts respecting the measures of Cobourg as confirmed the suspicions which the cabinet of Vienna already entertained in regard to his conduct, and led to his recall from the army, of which Clairfait assumed the command (2).

The cabinet of Vienna, however, secretly inclined to peace, delayed giving any definitive answer to the proposals of Mr. Pitt, and meanwhile entertained secret overtures from the French government, while Clairfait received orders to remain altogether on the right bank of the Rhine, and Alvinzi was merely detached with twenty-five thousand men to co-operate with the Duke of York in the defence of Holland. This retreat renewed the alarms of Prussia for her possessions on the Rhine, which was much increased by the cessation about the same period of the subsidies from the English government, who most justly declined to continue their monthly payments to a power which was doing nothing to the common cause. Frederick-William upon this withdrew twenty thousand of his best troops from the army of the Rhine, to join the forces which the Empress Catherine was moving towards Warsaw under the far-famed Suwarrow. The French immediately made themselves masters of the whole left bank of the Rhine; the castle of Rheinfels fell into their hands, and there remained nothing to the Allies of their great possessions on that side of the stream, but the fortresses of Luxembourg and Mayence. It was now evident that the coalition was rapidly approaching its dissolution; the King of Prussia openly received overtures for peace from the French government, while the Duke of Wurtemberg, the elector of Saxony, the elector of Mayence, and other lesser potentates, secretly made advances to the same effect, and insisted so strongly on the danger of their situation, that the Emperor, notwithstanding all the firmness of Thugut, was obliged to acquiesce in their pacific measures. The 5th of December was the day fixed for the discussion of the important question of peace or war in the diet of the empire. And such was the consternation generally diffused by the divisions of the Allies, and successes of the French, that fifty-seven voices then declared for  
Dec. 5. peace, and thirty-six demanded the King of Prussia for a mediator. This important resolution at once determined the conduct of Prussia: She now threw off the mask, and established conferences at Bale preparatory to a peace; while England made unheard-of efforts to retain Austria in the confederacy, and at length, by the offer of a subsidy of L.6,000,000, prevailed on

(1) Hard, iii. 41. Parl. Hist. xxxi. 1036.

(2) Hard, iii. 69—73.



that power to maintain her armies on the defensive on the banks of the Rhine, and resume, in the ensuing campaign, a vigorous offensive in Italy (1).

The successes which have been detailed, great as they were, were but the prelude, on the part of the French, to a winter campaign, attended with still more decisive results. Towards the end of October, Pichegru undertook the siege of Nimeguen; the Duke of York approached with thirty thousand men, and, by a vigorous sally upon the besiegers, who had the temerity to open their trenches, though the place was only invested on the left bank of the Waal, gained an ephemeral success, attended by no important consequences. Shortly after, the French established some batteries, destined to command the bridge which connected the town with the intrenched camp in its rear, and soon sunk some of the pontoons composing it, which so much disconcerted the Allied commanders, that they hastily evacuated the place, with the bulk of the garrison, in the night, leaving its defence to an inadequate garrison of three thousand men. These troops, discouraged by the flight of their fellow-soldiers, overawed by the redoubled fire of the besiegers, and despairing of maintaining the place, immediately attempted to follow their example. Terror seized their ranks; they precipitated themselves upon the bridge, which was burnt before the rearguard had passed over; one regiment was obliged to capitulate, and part of another, embarked on a flying bridge, was stranded on the left bank (2), and next day made prisoners by the French; and this splendid fortress, which rendered them masters of the passage of the Waal, fell into the hands of the Republicans.

Misunderstanding between the Dutch and English. The Dutch loudly reproached the English with the abandonment of this important point, but apparently without reason; for how was it to be expected that the Duke of York, with thirty thousand men, was to maintain himself, in presence of seventy thousand French, with the Rhine in his rear, when three times that force of Austrians had deemed themselves insecure, till they had that river, a hundred miles farther up, thrown between them and the enemy? Be that as it may, the evacuation of Nimeguen completed the misunderstanding between the Allied powers, and by spreading the belief in Holland that their cause was hopeless, and that their Allies were about to abandon them, eminently contributed to the easy conquest of the United-Provinces, which so soon after followed. Grave, six weeks after, capitulated, after an honourable resistance; and Breda, one of the last of the Dutch barrier towns, was invested (3).

The French army, worn out with seven months of incessant marching and bivouacs, now stood excessively in need of repose. The clothing of the soldiers was in rags, their shoes were worn out, and the equipments of the artillery, but for the supplies received from the captured places, would long ago have been exhausted. But all the representations of the Generals upon these points were overruled; and the Committee of Public Safety, inflamed by the spirit of conquest, and guided by the enterprise of Carnot, resolved upon exacting from them fresh sacrifices. Accustomed to find every difficulty yield to the devotion of the Republican soldiers, they resolved, after a month's rest to the soldiers (4), to prosecute their successes in the midst of a rigorous

(1) Hard. iii. 81, 93, 110.

(2) Jom. vi. 174, 179, Th. vii. 176, 177. Toul. v. 76.

(3) Toul. v. 77. Jom. vi. 175.

(4) Jom. vi. 179, 180. Th. vii. 178.

winter, and to render the severity of the season the means of overcoming the natural defences of the Dutch provinces.

The first object was to cross the Waal, and, after driving the Allied Forces over all the mouths of the Rhine, penetrate into Holland by the Isle of Bommel. For this purpose, boats had for some time past been collected at Fort Crevecoeur, and pontoons and other materials, for a bridge, at Bois-le-Duc; and the preparations having been completed, the passage was commenced, at daybreak, on the 12th November. But the firm countenance of the Allies defeated all their attempts; and, after several ineffectual efforts, Moreau, whose sagacity clearly perceived the danger of persisting in the design, withdrew his troops, and the army was put into winter quarters, between the Meuse and the Rhine (1).

Winter Campaign of Pichegru. Early in December, the Duke of York, supposing the campaign finished, set out for England, leaving to General Walmoden the perilous task of protecting, with an inferior and defeated army, a divided country, against a numerous and enterprising enemy. But a severe frost, which soon after set in, and rendered that winter long memorable in physical annals, made the Republicans conceive the design of invading Holland, while the frost rendered the numerous canals and rivers, which intersected the country, passable for troops and artillery. The prospect of that danger excited the utmost alarm in the mind of General Walmoden, who, seeing the Meuse frozed in his front, while the Rhine and the Waal were charged with floating ice in his rear, was justly afraid that the same cold which exposed his line to the attacks of the enemy, would render the passage of the arms of the sea impracticable, in the event of retreat. Influenced by these apprehensions, he passed his heavy cavalry to the other side of the Waal, evacuated his magazines and hospitals upon Deventer, and ordered the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, cantoned with the most advanced corps in the Isle of Bommel, to abandon it, on the first intelligence of the passage of the Meuse by the enemy (2).

Dec. 28, 1794. He makes a general Attack on the Allied Position. At the end of December, the Meuse being entirely frozen over, and the cold as low as 17° of Réaumur, the French army commenced its winter campaign by an attack on two columns of the Dutch advanced posts. The result was what might have been expected from an irruption into a cordon of posts by concentrated forces; the Dutch troops, after a slight resistance, fled in confusion, some to Utrecht, and others to Gorcum, leaving sixty pieces of cannon, and sixteen hundred prisoners, in the hands of the invaders. In the general confusion the Republicans even made themselves masters of some forts on the Waal, and crossed that river; but the stream being not yet passable for heavy artillery, Pichegru withdrew his troops to the left bank. But meanwhile the right of the Dutch position was assailed by the French, one brigade driven into Williamstadt, another Dec. 29. made prisoners, and Breda invested. On the following day Grave capitulated, after an honourable resistance of two months, and a bombardment of three weeks, from famine; a noble example, the more worthy of admiration, from its having occurred in the middle of the general consternation, and after numerous instances of shameful dereliction of duty on the part of the Dutch troops (3).

(1) *Jom.* vi. 182. *Toul.* v. 166. *Th.* vii. 181.

(2) *Jom.* vi. 186, 189. *Toul.* v. 170. *Th.* vii.

(3) *Jom.* vi. 183, 184. *Toul.* v. 167. *Th.* vii. 186—190.  
182, 183.

So many disasters produced their usual effect in sowing the seeds of dissension among the Allied Generals. Walmoden was desirous to concentrate his forces on the Waal between Nimeguen and St.-André, to make head against the French, who were making preparations to cross that river; but the Prince of Orange insisted on the Allied Forces approaching Gorcum, in order to cover the direct road to Amsterdam, where the Republican agents had been long preparing a revolutionary movement, and an explosion was daily expected.

Walmoden  
retires to-  
wards Ha-  
nover.

Thus thwarted in the only rational mode of carrying on the campaign, Walmoden resolved to abandon the United-Provinces to their fate, and with a view to secure his retreat to Hanover, concentrated the English forces behind the Linge, and covered them on the left by the Austrian contingents. Orders were at the same time given to abandon the line of the Waal as soon as the enemy should present themselves in force for the passage of that river. But an unexpected panic having occurred in the division intrusted with the park of artillery near Thiel, it became evident that this position, in the dejected state of the army, was not tenable, and the troops, with the exception of a small vanguard, were withdrawn behind the Rhine (1).

Dutch sue  
for Peace in  
vain.

Despairing of their situation after the departure of the English army, the States-General made proposals of peace to the French government, offering, as an inducement, to recognize the Republic, and pay down two hundred millions of francs. The proposals were in the highest degree desirable, as the success of the invasion depended entirely on the continuance of the frost, and an accommodation with Holland would disengage fifty thousand men for operations on the Rhine; but the Committee of Public safety, carried away by success, and desirous at all hazards of establishing a revolutionary government in Holland, haughtily rejected them, and ordered Pichegru instantly to invade that devoted country (2).

The continuance of the frost, which had now set in with more severity than had been known for a hundred years, gave an unlooked-for success to this ambitious determination. On the 8th January the French army crossed the Waal, now almost completely frozen, at various points, which was facilitated by the capture of Thiel by General Moreau.

A battle now could alone save the Dutch Republic; but the dejected state of the army, suffering under the extremity of cold and hardship, with the thermometer at 17° of Reaumur, rendered this a hopeless alternative. Walmoden, therefore, abandoned Holland altogether, and retiring to the line of the Issel from Arnheim to Zutphen, left the United-Provinces to their fate (3).

Stadtholder  
embarks for  
England.

The situation of the Stadtholder was now in the highest degree embarrassing. Abandoned by the army of General Walmoden, unable with his single forces to make head against the torrent of the Republican forces, distracted by the divisions in all the great towns in his rear, and daily expecting a revolution at Amsterdam, the Prince of Orange resolved to abandon the Republic altogether, and embark for England. With this view he presented himself before the States-General, and after declaring that he had done his utmost to save the country, but without success, avowed his resolution of retiring from his command, and recommended to them to make a separate peace with the enemy. On the following day he embarked

(1) Jom. vi. 189, 191. Th. vii. 191.

(2) Jom. vi. 192, 193.

(3) Th. vi. 191. Toul. v. 171. Jom. vi. 196.

at Schevennigen, and the States immediately issued an order to their soldiers to cease all resistance to the invaders, and despatched ambassadors to the head-quarters of Pichegru to propose terms of peace (1).

Revolution  
at Amsterdam.

Meanwhile the French generals, desirous to avoid the appearance of subjugating the Dutch, were pausing in their career of success, in expectation of revolutionary movements manifesting themselves in the principal towns. General Daendels wrote to the leaders of the insurrection: "The representatives of France are desirous that the Dutch people should enfranchise themselves; they will not subdue them as conquerors; they are only waiting till the inhabitants of Haarlem, Leyden, and Amsterdam, rise in a body, and unite themselves to their brethren who have taken the lead at Bois-le-Duc." The receipt of this offer raised to the utmost height the public effervescence at Amsterdam. The popular party of 1787 assembled in great numbers, and besieged the Burgomasters in the townhall, the advanced guard of the French army was already at the gates; terror seized the bravest hearts; the magistrates resigned their authority; the democratic leaders were installed in their stead; the tricolor flag hoisted on the Hôtel-de-Ville; and the Republican troops, amidst the shouts of the multitude, entered the city (2).

Which ad-  
mits the  
French  
troops.

The conquest of this rich and powerful city, which had defied the whole power of Louis XIV, and imposed such severe conditions on France at the treaties of Utrecht and Aix-la-Chapelle, was of immense importance to the French government. Utrecht, Leyden, Haarlem, and all the other towns of the Republic, underwent a similar revolution, and everywhere received the French soldiers as deliverers; the power of the Convention soon extended from the Pyrenees to the northern extremity of Friesland. The immense naval resources, the vast wealth which ages of independence had accumulated in the United-Provinces, lay at the mercy of the Convention. This great Revolution, to the honour of the democratic party be it recorded, was accomplished without bloodshed or any of the savage cruelty which had stained the first efforts of a free spirit in France; a signal example of the influence of free institutions in softening the asperity of civil dissension, calculated to alleviate many of the gloomy anticipations which the annals of the French Revolution might otherwise produce.

Dutch Fleet  
captured by  
the French  
Cavalry.

These successes were soon followed by others, if possible, still more marvellous. On the same day on which General Daendels had entered Amsterdam, the left wing of the army, after passing the lake of Biesbos on the ice, made themselves master of the great arsenal of Dordrecht, containing six hundred pieces of cannon, ten thousand muskets, and immense stores of ammunition. The same division immediately after passed through Rotterdam, and took possession of the Hague, where the States-General were assembled. To complete the wonders of the campaign, a body of cavalry and flying artillery crossed the Zuyder-Zee on the ice, and summoned the fleet, lying frozen up at the Texel; and the commanders, confounded at the hardihood of the enterprise, surrendered their ships to this novel species of assailants. At the same time the province of Zealand capitulated to the French troops; and the right wing of the army continuing its successes, compelled the English to abandon the line of the Issel; Friesland and Groningen were successively evacuated, and the whole United-Provinces

(1) Th. vii. 191. Jom. vi. 199.

(2) Jom. vi. 200. Toul. v. 175. Th. vii. 198.

overrun by the Republican arms. The English Government, finding their services useless on the continent, dismissed the Hanoverians to their native country, and the British, embarked on board their ships, speedily carried the terror of their arms to the remotest colonies of the Indian seas (1).

The discipline of the French soldiers during this campaign, contributed as much as their valour to these astonishing successes. Peaceable citizens, converted into soldiers by the decree of September 1793, were rapidly converted into disciplined soldiers; after eight months of marches and combats, they undertook, without murmuring, a winter campaign; destitute of almost every thing, from the extreme depression of the paper money (2), in which they received their pay, they crossed numerous streams in the depth of a rigorous winter, and penetrated, after a month's bivouacking, to Amsterdam, without having committed the slightest disorder. The inhabitants of that wealthy capital, justly apprehensive of pillage from the entrance of so necessitous a body, were astonished to see ten regiments of soldiers, half-naked, defile through their streets to the sound of military music, pile their arms in the midst of ice and snow, and calmly wait, as in their own metropolis, the quarters and barracks assigned for their lodging (3).

Violent Measure of Spoliation adopted by the French. It was such splendid conduct as this which spread so generally, and perpetuated so long, the general illusion in favour of Republican institutions; but the Dutch were not long in being awakened to sad realities from their deceitful dream: Forty of their ships of war had been withdrawn with the Prince of Orange, and were lodged in the British ports; the remaining fifty were immediately taken possession of by the Republicans for the service of the French. The credit of the famous Bank of Amsterdam was violently shaken, and owed its withstanding the shock to the intervention of government; forced requisitions, to an immense amount, of clothing, stores, and provisions, gave them a foretaste of the sweets of military domination; while a compulsory regulation, which compelled the shopkeepers to accept of the depreciated French assignats at the rate of nine sous for a franc, restored the army to abundance by throwing the loss arising from the depreciation, upon the inhabitants of the enfranchised capital (4).

To complete the picture of this memorable campaign, it is only necessary to recount the concluding operations on the Upper-Rhine and the Alps.

The check at Kayserlautern having induced the French government to reinforce their troops on the German frontier, ten thousand men were withdrawn from Savoy, and fifteen thousand from la Vendée, to augment the armies on the Rhine. By the middle of June the armies on the Rhine amounted to 114,000 men, of whom fifty thousand were on the Lower part of the river, forty thousand on the Upper, and twenty-four thousand in the Vosges mountains. The Committee of Public Safety incessantly impressed upon General Michaud, who commanded them, the necessity of taking the initiative, by renewing his attacks without intermission, and of acting in large masses; but that General, not sufficiently aware of the new species of warfare which the Republicans had commenced, adhered to the old system of a parallel attack along the whole line. The action took place on

(1) Jom. vi. 208, 212. Th. vii. 194, 195.

(2) The soldiers being still paid in assignats, which passed only for one-fifteenth of their real value, the pay of an officer was only equal in real value to three francs, or half-a-crown a-month. In

1795, one-third was paid in specie, which raised the income of a captain to seventy francs or three pounds sterling a-month.—Jom. vi. 214.

(3) Jom. vi. 215. Th. vii. 193.

(4) Th. vii. 199.

July 2. the 2d July, and led to no decisive result. The enemy were touched at all points, but vigorously pushed at none; and one thousand men lost to the Republicans without any advantage. Upon receiving intelligence of this check, Carnot renewed his orders to concentrate his forces, and act by columns on particular points. A fortnight after the attack was renewed, and, by a concentrated effort against the centre of the Allied position, their whole army was compelled to retire (1). The Republicans advanced in pursuit as far as Frankenthal, and resumed the line of the Rehbach, abandoned at the commencement of the campaign. In this affair the Allies lost three thousand men, and the spirit of victory was transferred to the other side.

Aug. 9. Both parties remained in a state of inactivity after this contest, until the beginning of August, when the Army of the Moselle, being reinforced by fifteen thousand choice troops from la Vendée, and raised to forty thousand men, made a forward movement and occupied Treves. But while this was going forward, the Prussian army, instructed by their recent disaster, and observing the dispersed position of the French army in the valley of the Rhine, made a sudden attack with twenty-five thousand men upon the division of General Meynier at Kayserlautern, totally defeated them, and drove them back with the loss of four thousand men. Had this success been vigorously supported, it might have led to the most important results, and totally changed the fate of the campaign; but not being

Army of the  
Moselle  
occupies  
Treves.

Aug. 19. followed up by the bulk of the Allied Force, which still preserved its extending position, it produced only a temporary consternation in the French armies. In effect, such was the inactivity of the Allied Generals, and their obstinate adherence to the system of position, that they allowed the Army of the Moselle, not forty thousand strong, to remain undisturbed in Treves for two months, though flanked on one side by sixty-five thousand Prussians and Austrians, who occupied the Palatinate; and, on the other, by eighty thousand Imperialists, who were encamped in the neighbourhood of Luxembourg (2).

At length, in the beginning of October, the Committee of Public Safety directed the armies of the Moselle and the Rhine to unite and expel the Allies from the Palatinate. Their junction having been effected, and the

Oct. 17. retreat of Clairfait beyond the Rhine exposed their right flank to be turned, the Prussians fell back to Mayence, and crossed to the right bank by its bridge of boats. That important fortress was soon after invested; Rheinfels, contrary to the most express orders, evacuated; and the old Marshal

Allies driven over the  
Rhine, and  
Mayence invested.

Bender shut up in the great fortress of Luxembourg, with ten thousand men. The rigours of the season, and the contagious diseases incident to the great accumulation of young soldiers, soon filled the hospitals, and the Republican armies were more severely weakened by the mortality of their winter rest, than they had been by the losses of a summer campaign (3).

Conclusion  
of the Cam-  
paign in  
Savoy.

In Savoy, the great detachments made in June to reinforce the Army of the Rhine, reduced the French armies to the defensive; and they confined their efforts to maintain themselves till the falling of the snows on the summits of the Alps, from the neighbourhood of Gex to the valley of the Stura. The plan of Bonaparte for the invasion of Pied-

(1) Jom. vi. 59, 75, 77. Th. vii. 88, 89.

(2) Jom. vi. 78, 87. Th. vii. 89.

(3) Jom. vi. 86—91. Th. vii. 89.

mont by the valley of the Stura, was not adopted by the Committee of Public Safety, and the breathing-time thus afforded them enabled the court of Turin to recover from their consternation. Not disconcerted with this, he presented a second plan to the government, the object of which was to move forward the Army of Italy to Demonte, and, after reducing that place, advance to the valley of Coni, while sixteen thousand men, from the Army of the Alps, covered their operations; the result of which would have been, that fifty thousand men would have taken up their winter-quarters on the southern side of the Alps. The fall of Robespierre prevented the execution of this plan, and postponed for two years the glories of the Italian campaign. Reduced, by the orders of the new government, to defensive measures, the Army of the Alps yet gained a brilliant advantage, by defeating a corps of ten thousand Austrians and Piedmontese, who had advanced, in concert with the English fleet, against Savona, in order to cut off the communication between the Republicans and the State of Genoa, from which their principal resources were derived. After this success both parties retired into their winter-quarters, and the snows of that rigorous season there, as elsewhere, gave repose to the contending armies (1).

Renewal of the War in la Vendée. The contest in la Vendée, which a little humanity on the part of the government would have completely terminated after the victories of Savenay and Le Mans, was rekindled during this year by the severities exercised towards the vanquished. The state of la Vendée at this period is thus painted by an eye-witness attached to the Republican armies.—“I did not see a single male being at the towns of Saint-Amand, Chantonay, or Herbiers. A few women alone had escaped the Republican sword. Country-seats, once so numerous in that country, farm-houses, cottages, in fine, habitations of every sort, had been reduced to ashes. The herds and flocks were wandering in terror around their usual places of shelter, now smoking in ruins, and lowing in vain for the hands which were wont to feed them. At night, the flickering and dismal blaze of conflagration afforded light over the whole country. The bleating of the disturbed flocks, and the bellowing of the terrified cattle, was drowned in the hoarse note of the ravens, and the howling of the wolves and other wild animals who had been attracted from afar to the scene of slaughter. As I journeyed in the night, guided by the uncertain light of the flames, a distant column of fire, widening and increasing as I approached, served as a beacon. It was the town of Mortagne in flames (2). When I arrived there, no living creatures were to be seen except a few wretched women, who were striving to save some remnants of their property during the general conflagration.”

These appalling cruelties were universal, and produced the usual effect of such excessive and uncalled-for severity. The infernal columns of Turreau, the Noyades of Carrier, drove the Vendéens to desperation. “Nulla spes victis si non desperare salutem,” became the principle of a new war, if possible more murderous and disastrous than the former; but it was conducted on a different principle. Broken and dispersed by the Republican forces, pierced in every direction by the infernal columns, the Vendéens were unable to collect any considerable body of forces; but from amidst their woods and fastnesses, they maintained in detached parties an undaunted resistance.

(1) Th. vii. 90, 91. Jour. vi. 97, 110, 114.

(2) Mém. d'un Ancien Administrateur des Armées Républicaines, p. 97.

Stofflet and Charette continued, after the death of the other chiefs, to direct their efforts, but their mutual jealousy prevented any operations of considerable importance, and led them to sacrifice to their ambition the gallant M. de Marigny, one of the most intrepid and constant of the Royalist leaders (1).

Storming of  
Turreau's  
intrenched  
camps.

In the spring of 1794, General Turreau established sixteen intrenched camps round the insurgent district; but the detachment of twenty-five thousand men from la Vendée to the Pyrenees and the Moselle, having compelled him to remain on the defensive, the Royalists took advantage of the respite thus afforded to reorganize their forces. Forty thousand men, including two thousand horse, were soon under arms in this unconquerable district, with which Charette stormed three of the intrenched camps, and put their garrisons to the sword (2).

Meanwhile the severities of the Republicans, in persecuting the peasants of Brittany, who sheltered the fugitive Vendéens, kindled a new and terrible warfare in that extensive province, which, under the name of the Chouan War, long consumed the vitals, and paralysed the forces of the Republic. The nobles of that district, Puisaye, Bourmont, George Cadoudal, and others, commenced a guerilla warfare with murderous effect, and soon on a space of twelve hundred square leagues, thirty thousand men were in arms in detached parties of two or three thousand each (3).

Brittany, intersected by wooded ridges, abounding with hardy smugglers, ardently devoted to the Royalist cause, and containing a population of 2,500,000 souls, afforded far greater resources for the Royalist cause than the desolated Vendée, which never contained a third of that number of inhabitants. Puisaye was the soul of the insurrection. Proscribed by the Convention, with a price set upon his head; wandering from château to château, from cottage to cottage, he became acquainted with the spirit of the Britons, their

Rise of the  
Chouan War.

inextinguishable hatred of the Convention, and conceived the bold design of hoisting the Royal standard again amidst its secluded fastnesses. His indefatigable activity, energetic character, and commanding eloquence, eminently qualified this intrepid chief to become the leader of a party, and soon brought all the other Briton nobles to range themselves under his standard. Early in 1794, he opened a communication with the English government, and strongly urged the immediate landing of an expedition of ten thousand men, with arms and ammunition, with which he answered for

its vast ex-  
tent.

the re-establishment of the Royalist cause. So formidable did this war soon become, that, according to an official report of Carnot before the end of the year, there were no less than 120,000 Republicans on the shores of the ocean, of whom above eighty thousand were in active warfare. Even in Normandy, the seeds of revolt were beginning to manifest themselves; and detached parties showed themselves between the Loire and the Seine, which struck terror into Paris itself. "On considering this state of affairs," says Jomini, "it is evident that there existed over all the west of France, powerful elements of resistance, and that if they had been united under one head, and seconded by the Allied Powers, it was by no means impossible to have restored the Royalist cause." Had the Duke d'Enghien, with a few thousand men, landed in Brittany, and established a council, directing

(1) Jom. v. 278. Lac. xii. 295.

(2) Lac. xii. 297. Jom. vi. 284.

(3) Jom. vi. 243—246.



alike Puisaye, Bernier, Stofflet, Sapinaud, Scapeaux, and others, so as to combine their energies for one common object, instead of acting as they did without any concert in detached quarters, it is impossible to calculate what the result might have been. It is painful to think what at that crisis might have been effected, had fifteen thousand troops from England formed the nucleus of an army, made the Royalists masters of some of the fortified seaport towns with which the coast abounded, and lent to the insurgents the aid of her fleet, and the terrors of her name (1).

Immense  
results of  
the Cam-  
paign.

Such was the memorable campaign of 1794; one of the most glorious in the annals of France; not the least memorable in the history of the world. Beginning on every side, under disastrous or critical circumstances, it terminated with universal glory. The Allies, at its commencement, were besieging, and soon captured the last of the Flemish frontier towns; the forces on the Rhine were unable to make head against their adversaries; the Alps were still in the possession of the Sardinian troops, and severe disasters had checkered the campaign at both extremities of the Pyrenees. At its conclusion, the Spaniards, defeated both in Biscay and Catalonia, were suing for peace; the Piedmontese, driven over the summit of the Alps, were trembling for their Italian possessions; the Allied forces had everywhere recrossed the Rhine; Flanders was subdued, la Vendée vanquished, Holland revolutionized, and the English banners had fled for refuge into the states of Hanover. From a state of depression, greater than the darkest era of Louis XIV, France had passed at once to triumphs greater than had graced the proudest period of his reign.

The prodigious  
Forces  
of the Re-  
public.

But these immense successes had not been gained without proportionate losses, and it was already evident that the enormous sacrifices by which they had been achieved, could not be continued for any length of time without inducing national ruin. During the course of the campaign the Republic had strained every nerve; 1,700,000 men had at one time combated by sea and land under its banners; and at its close, 1,100,000 were still numbered in the rolls of the army. But of this great force, only 600,000 were actually under arms; the remainder encumbered the hospitals, or were scattered in a sickly or dying state in the villages on the line of the army's march. The disorder in the Commissariat, and departments intrusted with the clothing and equipment of the troops, had risen to the highest pitch; hardly any exertions could have provided for the wants of such a multitude of armed men, and the cupidity or selfishness of the revolutionary agents had diverted great part of the funds destined for these objects, into the accumulation of their private fortunes. It augments our admiration for the soldiers of the Republic, when we recollect that their triumphs were generally achieved without magazines, tents, or equipments of any kind; that the armies, destitute of every thing (2), bivouacked in the most rigorous season, equally with the mildest, and that the innumerable multitudes who issued from its frontiers, almost always provided for their daily wants from the country through which they passed.

Immense  
Issues of  
Assignats  
to uphold  
these great  
Expenses.

Nothing could have enabled the government to make head against such expenses, but the system of assignats, which in effect, for the time, gave them the disposal of all the wealth of France (3). The funds on which this enormous paper circulation was based, em-

(1) Jom. vi. 234, 252.

(2) Jom. vi. 214, 215. Toul. v. 194.

(3) The monthly expenses of the war had risen to 200,000 000 francs, or nearly L. 8,000,000, while

bracing all the confiscated property in the kingdom, in lands, houses, and moveables, was estimated at fifteen milliards, or nearly L. 700,000,000 sterling; but in the distracted state of the country, few purchasers could be found for such immense national domains, and, therefore, the security for all practical purposes was merely nominal. The consequence was, that the assignat fell to one-twelfth of its real value; in other words, an assignat for twenty-four francs, was only worth two francs; that is, a note for a pound was worth only 1s. 8d. As all the payments, both to and by government, were made in this depreciated currency, and, as it constituted the chief, and in many places, the sole, circulation of the country, the losses to creditors or receivers of money of every description became enormous (1); and, in fact, the public expenses were defrayed out of the chasm made in their private fortunes. It was evident, that such a state of things could not continue permanently; and, accordingly, the national exhaustion appeared in the campaign of 1793, and the Republic would have sunk under the failure of its financial resources in a few years, had not the genius of Napoléon discovered a new mode of maintaining the armies, and by making war maintain war, converted a suffering defensive, into an irresistible aggressive power.

Progressive  
increase of  
the French  
Forces dur-  
ing the  
Campaign.

At the commencement of the campaign, the Allies were an overmatch for the French at every point, and the superiority of their discipline was more especially evident in the movements and attacks of large masses. That their enterprises were not conducted with skill; that they suffered under the jealousies and division of the cabinets which directed their movements; and that by adhering to the ruinous system of extending their forces, and a war of position, they threw away all the advantages which might have arisen from the number and experience of their forces, must appear evident to the most careless observer. The fate of the campaign in Flanders was decided by the detachment of Jourdan, with forty thousand men from the Meuse, to reinforce the army of the Sambre; what then might have been expected, if Cobourg had early concentrated his forces for a vigorous attack in Flanders, or the immense masses which lay inactive on the Rhine, been brought to bear on the general fortune of the campaign (2)?

The Period  
of Success  
for the Allies  
was past.

But it may be doubted whether, by any exertions, the Allied cause could have been finally made triumphant in France at this period. The time for energetic measures was past; the revolutionary fever was burning with full fury, and 1,500,000 men were in arms to defend the Republic. By bringing up column after column to the attack; by throwing away with merciless prodigality the lives of the conscripts; by sparing neither blood nor treasure to accomplish their objects; by drawing without scruple upon the wealth of one-half of France by confiscation, and of the other by assignats, the Committee of Public Safety had produced a force, which was for the time unconquerable. By a more energetic and combined system of warfare, the Allies might have broken through the frontier on more than one point, and wrested from France her frontier fortresses; but they would probably have found in the heart of the country, a resistance, which would

the income was only 60,000,000, or L. 2,400,000; an enormous deficit, amounting to L. 75,000,000 in the year, which was supplied only by the incessant issue of paper money, bearing, by law, a forced circulation. There were 7,500,000,000 of francs, or L. 330,000,000 in circulation; the sum in the

treasury was still 500,000,000, or L. 20,000,000; so that the amount issued by government was eight milliards, or L. 350,000,000 sterling.—*Toul. v. 194. Th. vii. 239.*

(1) *Th. vii. 239.*

(2) *Jom. vi. 330, 338.*

in the end have proved their ruin. What might have been easily done by vigorous measures in 1792 or 1793, could not have been accomplished by any exertions in 1794, after the great levies of the Convention had come into the field, and the energy of the revolution was turned into military confidence by the successes which had concluded the preceding campaign.

General Reflections on the Campaign. It deserves notice too, what signal benefit accrued to France in this campaign from its central position, and the formidable barrier of fortified towns with which it was surrounded. By possessing an interior while the Allies were compelled to act on an exterior line, the French government was enabled to succour the weak parts of their frontier, and could bring their troops to bear in overwhelming masses on one point, while their opponents, moving round a larger circumference, charged with the protection of different kingdoms, and regulated by distant, and often discordant cabinets, were unable to make corresponding movements to resist them. Thus, the transference of the army, which conquered at Toulon, to the Eastern Pyrenees; of the divisions of the army of Savoy to the Rhine; of Jourdan's corps to the Sambre; and of the garrison of Mayence to Nantes; the immediate causes of the successes in Catalonia, the Palatinate, Flanders, and la Vendée, successively took place, without any corresponding movement having been made in the Allied Forces opposed to them, to reinforce the threatened quarters. Each division of the Allied Forces, delighted at being relieved from the pressure under which it had previously suffered, relapsed into a state of inactivity, without ever recollecting, that with an active and enterprising enemy, a serious defeat at one point was a disaster at all.

Great Military Effect of the French Fortresses. The Archduke Charles has said that the great superiority of France, in a military point of view, arises from the chain of fortresses with which it is surrounded, whereby it is enabled, with equal facility, to throw delays in the way of an invasion of their own, and to find a solid base for an irruption into their neighbour's territory; and that the want of such a barrier on the right bank of the Rhine is the principal defect in the system of German defence (1). The campaign of 1794 affords a striking confirmation of this observation. After having driven the French forces, during the campaign of 1793, from the field, and compelled them to seek shelter in intrenched camps, or fortified towns, the Allies were so much impeded by the siege of the fortresses which lay in their road, that they were compelled to halt in their career of success; and France had time to complete the vast armaments which afterwards proved so fatal to Europe. When the Republic, on the other hand, became the invading power, in 1794, the want of any fortified towns to resist their progress, enabled them to overrun Flanders, and drive the Allies, in a few weeks, beyond the Rhine. This consideration is of vital importance, both in the estimate of the relative power of France and the neighbouring states, and in all measures intended to restrain its ambitious projects.

There are few spectacles in nature so sublime as that of a people bravely combating for their liberties, against a powerful and vindictive enemy. That spectacle was exhibited in the most striking manner by the French nation during this campaign. The same impartial justice which condemns with unmeasured severity, the bloody internal, must admire the dignified and resolute external conduct of the Convention. With unbending firmness

(1) Archduke Charles, i. p. 274.

they coerced alike internal revolt, and foreign violence; and selecting out of the innumerable ranks of their defenders the most worthy, laid the foundation of that illustrious school of military chiefs who afterwards sustained the fortunes of the empire. It is melancholy to be obliged to admit, that it was this cruelty which was one cause of their triumphs; and that the fortunes of the Republic might have sunk under its difficulties, but for the inflexible severity with which they overawed the discontented; and the iron rule of terror, which drew out of the agonies of the state the means of its ultimate deliverance. The impartial justice of Providence apparently made that terrific period the means of punishing the national sins of both the contending parties; and while the sufferings of the Republic were the worthy retribution of its cruelty, the triumphs to which they led brought deserved chastisement on those powers, who had sought, in that suffering, the means of unjust aggrandizement.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

## WAR IN POLAND.

## ARGUMENT.

Immense extent of Poland in former times—Causes of its continual Disasters—It has retained the Pastoral and Independent Character unmixed—Representative system arose from the Councils of the Church—No intermixture of Foreign Customs in Poland—Its Society differently constructed from any in Europe—They still retain the Taste and Habits of the Nomade Tribes—Their early and indomitable Democratic Spirit—The Clergy formed a different Body from any in Europe—Nobility never engaged in any Profession or Trade, which all fell into the hands of the Jews—Liberty and Equality the early Passion of the People—No Hereditary Offices admitted in the Nobility—Crown ultimately became Elective—General Assemblies of the People—The Liberum Veto—Representative system never thoroughly Established—Pledges universally exacted from the Deputies: and they were regularly called to account for their Conduct—Great increase of the Democratic Power at the close of the Eighteenth Century—Forces of the Republic—Their long and desperate Wars with the Asiatic Tribes—Their Weakness early suggested the idea of Dismemberment to the adjoining States—Great Exploits of John Sobieski—His Prophetic anticipation of the Partition of Poland from its Democratic Divisions—With him the Polish Power was extinguished—Excessive Democratic Strife after his Death—Increasing Weakness and Anarchy of the Republic; which made their Partition in 1772 easy—When too late, they abandon their ruinous Democratic Privileges—Commencement of their last Struggle They take up Arms from despair, and elect Kosciusko as a Leader—He defeats the Russians at Raslawice—Warsaw is taken by the Insurgents—Poles in the Russian Army disbanded—Great exertions of Kosciusko—Want of a large Regular Force proved fatal to him—Russians and Prussians advance against Warsaw, but are compelled to raise the Siege—Suwarrow defeats one of their Corps, and Kosciusko is routed and made Prisoner at Maciowice—Patriots shut themselves up in Warsaw—Storming of Praga and Warsaw by Suwarrow—Atrocious massacre by the Russians—Great sensation produced by the Fall of Warsaw in Europe—Poland fell the victim of Democratic madness and oppression—Striking contrast afforded by the steady growth of Russia—Subsequent punishment of the partitionary Powers—Gallant spirit of the exiled Polish hands—Comparison of Polish and English history—Disastrous Effect of the Polish War on the Coalition against France.

PROVIDENCE has so interwoven human affairs, that when we wish to retrace the revolutions of a people, and to investigate the causes of their grandeur or misfortune, we are insensibly conducted step by step to their cradle. The slightest consideration of the History of Poland must be sufficient to prove, that that great nation, always combating, often victorious, but never securing its conquests, has from the earliest times been on the decline (1). It emerged from the shock which overthrew the Roman empire, valiant, powerful, and extensive; from that hour it has invariably drooped, until at length it became the victim of its ancient provinces.

Immense extent of Poland in former times. The kingdom of Poland formerly extended from the Borysthenes to the Danube, and from the Euxine to the Baltic. The Sarmatia of the ancients, it embraced within its bosom the original seat of those nations which subverted the Roman Empire; Prussia, Moravia, Bohemia, Hungary, the Ukraine, Courland, Livonia, are all fragments of its mighty dominion. The Goths, who appeared as suppliants on the Danube,

(1) Salvandy, i. 18.

and were ferried across by Roman hands never to recede; the Huns, who under Attila spread desolation through the empire; the Slavonians, who overspread the greater part of Europe, emerged from its vast and uncultivated plains. But its subsequent progress has but ill corresponded to such a commencement: while, in all other states, liberty, riches, power, and glory, have advanced with equal steps, and the victories of one age have contributed to the advancement of that which succeeded it; in Poland, alone, the greatest triumphs have been immediately succeeded by the greatest reverses; the establishment of its internal freedom has led to nothing but external disaster, and the deliverer of Europe in one age was in the next swept from the book of nations.

Causes of its continued Disasters. This extraordinary history has all arisen from one cause,—that Poland has retained, till a very recent period, the independence and equality of savage life. It has neither been subjugated by more polished, nor itself vanquished more civilized states. The equality and valour of the pastoral character have, in their native plains, remained unchanged during fifteen hundred years, neither grafted on the stock of urban liberty, nor moulded by the institutions of civilized society. Poland shows what in its original state was the equality of pastoral life: Neither the resistance, nor the tastes, nor the intelligence, nor the blood of vanquished nations, have altered in its inhabitants the inclinations and passions of the savage character. We may see in its history what would have been the fate of all the Northern nations, if their fierce and unbending temper had not been tempered by the blood, and moulded by the institutions of a more advanced civilization; and in the anarchy of its diets, what would have been the representative system, had the dream of Montesquieu been well-founded, that it was found in the woods (1).

It has retained the Pastoral and independent Character unmixed. The shepherds who wandered in the plains of Sarmatia were, like all other pastoral tribes, inflamed by the strongest passion for that savage freedom, which consists in leading a life exempt from all control—in wandering at will over boundless plains, resting where they chose, and departing when they wished. In their incursions into the Roman provinces they collected immense troops of captives, who were compelled to perform the works of drudgery, in which their masters disdained to engage; to attend the cattle, drive the waggons, and make the arms. Their imperious lords, acknowledging no superior themselves, knew no restraint in the treatment of their inferiors. With the same energy they asserted that tyranny over that unhappy race, with which they would have resisted any attempt to encroach on their own independence. Such as Poland then was, it has ever since continued,—a race of jealous freemen, and iron-bound slaves; a wild democracy ruling a captive people.

— “*Ferrea iuga  
Insanumque Forum.*”

Representative System arose from the Christian Councils. It is a mistake to suppose that the representative system was found in the woods. What was found there was not any thing resembling parliaments, but Polish equality. The pastoral nations of the North equally with the citizens of the Republics of antiquity, had no idea of the exercise of the rights of freemen, but by the concurrence of

*all* the citizens. Of course this privilege could only be exercised by a small number of them when the state became populous, and hence the narrow base on which with them the fabric of liberty was framed. The assemblies of the Champ-de-Mai, accordingly, equally with the early convocations of the Normans in England, were attended by all the freemen who held of the king; and sixty thousand Norman horsemen assembled at Winchester, to deliberate with the conqueror concerning the vanquished kingdom (1). This was the original system in all the European states, and this is what the Polish diet has always continued. It was the Christian Church, the parent of so many lofty doctrines and new ideas, which had the glory of offering to the world, amidst the wreck of ancient institutions, the model of a form of government, which gives to all interests the right of suffrage, by establishing a system which may embrace the remotest interests; which preserves the energy, and avoids the principal evils of democracy; which maintains the Tribune, and shuns the strife of the Forum. The Christian councils were the first example of representative assemblies; there were united the whole Roman world; there a priesthood, which embraced the civilised earth, assembled by means of delegates to deliberate on the affairs of the Universal Church. When Europe revived, it adopted the same model. Every nation, by degrees, borrowed the customs of the Church, then the sole depository of the traditions of civilization. It was the religion of the vanquished people; it was the clergy who instructed them in this admirable system, which flourished in the councils of Nice, Sardis, and Byzantium, centuries before it was heard of in the Western World, and which did not arise in the woods of Germany, but in the catacombs of Rome during the sufferings of the primitive Church (2).

Vienna was the frontier station of the Roman empire. It never extended into the Sarmatian wilds, and hence the chief cause of the continued calamities of their descendants. It was the infusion of the free spirit of the Scythian tribes into the decaying provinces of the Roman empire, and the union of barbaric energy with antiquated civilization, which produced the glories of modern Europe. In Poland alone, savage independence remained unaltered by foreign admixture, and the customs of the earliest ages continued unchanged down to the partition of the monarchy. After representative assemblies had been established for centuries in Germany, France, and England, the Poles adhered to the ancient custom of summoning every free man to discuss sword in hand the affairs of the Republic. An hundred thousand horsemen met in the field of Volo, near Warsaw, to deliberate on public affairs, and the distractions of these stormy diets weakened the nation even more than the attacks of its foreign enemies. Among them was established, to their sorrow, the real system which was invented in the woods (3).

No inter-  
mixture of  
Foreign  
Customs in  
Poland. In Poland, accordingly, the structure of society was essentially different from that which obtained in any other part of Europe. Its society  
differently  
constructed  
from any in  
Europe. The feudal system, the chain of military dependence from the throne to the cottage, was there unknown. The Republic was composed entirely of two classes, the one destined to labour, dejection, and servitude, the other to independence, activity, and war. That iron band which held

(1) Thierry, ii. 286.  
(2) Salv. i. 107, 108.

(3) Salv. i. 109. Rulh. i. 10, 14.

together the discordant elements of modern society, which united the vanquished strong in their civilization, their laws, and their religion, and the victors strong in their power, their valour, and their conquests; which bound alike the nobility and the priesthood, the municipalities, and the throne; which in the wisdom of Providence, amidst many evils, produced innumerable blessings, was wanting to the Poles, and thence it is, that Poland is no more. Thence it was that she exhibited the spectacle of a nation without a people, since the numerous class of slaves could not deserve that name; of armies alike without discipline, infantry, or artillery; of a state undefended by frontier towns; of cities without a race of burghers, without commerce or industry; of a republic where the supreme power was annihilated, and the checks to it omnipotent (1).

They still retain the taste and habits of the Nomade Tribes. The taste and the habits of the Nomade tribes have, almost to our time, predominated among the Poles. Their language, their manners, even their dress, long remained unchanged,—the frequent use of furs, the flowing pelisse, caps of the skins of wild beasts, the absence of linen, and the magnificence of their arms, are the characteristics of their national costume. Till within these few years they wore the singular crown of hair, which in the time of the Scythians encircled their bare heads. The passion for a wandering life has been transmitted to their latest posterity, and remains undiminished amidst all the refinements of civilization. To travel in the country, living in tents, to pass from one encampment to another, has been in every age one of the most favourite amusements of the Polish noblesse; and it was in such occupations that the last years of the great Sobieski were employed (2).

This fierce and unbending race of freemen preserved inviolate, as the Magna-Charta of Poland, the right to assemble in person, and deliberate on the public affairs of the state. The terrible assembly, where all the proprietors of the soil were convoked, constituted at once the military strength of the nation in war, and its legislature in peace. There were discussed alike the public concerns of the republic, the private feuds or grievances of individuals, the questions of peace or war, the formation of laws, the division of plunder, and the election of the sovereign (3).

Their early and indomitable Democratic Spirit. In the eyes of this haughty race, the will of a freeman was a thing which no human power should attempt to subjugate; and therefore the fundamental principle of all their deliberations was, that unanimity was essential to every resolution. This relic of savage equality, of which the traces are still to be found in the far-famed jury system of England, was productive of incalculable evils to the republic; and yet so blind are men to the cause of their own ruin, that it was uniformly adhered to with enthusiastic resolution by the Poles and is even spoken of with undisguised admiration by their national historians. But all human institutions must involve some methods of extricating public affairs, and as unanimity was not to be expected among so numerous and empassioned a body as their diet, and the idea was not to be entertained for a moment of constraining the will of any citizen, they adopted the only other method of expediting business, they massacred the recusant. This measure appeared to them an incomparably lesser evil, than carrying measures by a majority.

(1) Salv. i. 31. Rulh. i. 14.

(2) Salv. i. 30.

(3) Rulh. i. 15.



“Because,” said they, “acts of violence are few in number, and affect only the individual sufferers; but if once the precedent is established of compelling the minority to yield to the majority, there is an end to any security for the liberties of the people (1).”

It may easily be imagined what discords and divisions were nursed up under such a system. Fanned by the flame excited at all their national diets, the different provinces of the republic have in every age nourished the most profound animosity against each other. The waywods and palatinates into which every province was divided for the administration of justice, or the arrangements of war, became divided among each other, and transmitted the feuds of the earliest times to their remotest descendants. “That Hierarchy of enmities,” as the Poles expressed it, descended even to private families; in the progress of time, religious discord divided the whole republic into two parties nearly equal in strength, and implacable in hostility, and Poland became an immense field of combat, destined never to know either tranquillity or truce till it passed under the yoke of a foreign master (2).

Clergy formed a different body from any in Europe. The clergy, that important body who have done so much for the freedom of Europe, never formed a separate order, or possessed any spiritual influence in Poland. Composed entirely of the nobles, they had no sympathy with the serfs, whom they disdained to admit to any of their sacred offices. Their bishops interfered, not as prelates but as barons, not with the wand of peace, but the sword of dissension. The priesthood formed in their stormy diets a sort of tribunes, subject to the passions of the multitude, but exempt, by reason of their sacred character, from the danger which formed a check upon their extravagance. This was another consequence of the Poles not having settled in a conquered country; the clergy of the other European states, drawn from the vanquished people, formed a link between them and their conquerors, and by reason of the influence which their intellectual superiority conferred, gradually softened the yoke of bondage to the vanquished; the Polish priesthood, formed entirely of the nobility, added to the chains of slavery the fetters of barbaric superstition (3).

Nobility never engaged in any Profession or Trade. As if every thing was destined to concur for the disorganization of Poland, the inequality of fortunes, and the rise of urban industry, the source of so much benefit to all the other European monarchies, was there productive only of positive evil. Fearful of being compelled to divide their power with the inferior classes of society, when elevated by riches and intelligence, the nobles affixed the stigma of dishonour to every lucrative or useful profession. Their maxim was, that nobility is not lost by indigence, or domestic servitude, but is totally destroyed by commerce and industry; their constant policy was to debar the serfs from all knowledge of the use of arms, both because they had learned to fear, and because they continued to despise them. In fine, the Polish nobility, strenuously resisting every species of power as a usurpation, every kind of industry as a degradation, every attempt at superiority as an outrage, remained to the close of their career at open variance with all the principles on which the prosperity of society depends (4).

Which all fell into the hands of the Jews.

As some species of industry however is indispensable where wealth has begun to accumulate; and as the vast possessions of the nobility gave great encouragement to those who would minister to their

(1) Salv. i. 40. Rulh. i. 11, 24.

(2) Salv. i. 41. Rulh. i. 25.

(3) Salv. i. 62.

(4) Salv. i. 72, 73.

wants, the labour of towns insensibly increased, and an urban population gradually arose. But as the nobles were too proud, and the serfs too indigent, to engage in such employments, they fell exclusively into the hands of a foreign race, who were willing to submit to the degradation for the sake of the profit. The Jews spread like a leprosy over the country, monopolizing every lucrative employment, excluding the peasantry from the chance even of bettering their condition by changing their employment; and superadding to the instinctive aversion of the free citizens at every species of labour, the horror connected with the occupations of that hateful race. Thus, the rise of towns, and the privileges of corporations, the origin of free institutions, in so many other countries, were there productive only of evil, by augmenting the disinclination of all classes to engage in their occupations; the Jews multiplied in a country where they were enabled to engross all the industrial occupations; and at this moment above half of the whole descendants of Abraham are to be found in what formerly were the Polish dominions (1).

Five hundred years before liberty and equality became the watch-word of the French Revolution, they were the favourite principles of the Polish republic. Anarchy and disorder did not prevail in the country, because the throne was elective; but the throne became elective, because the people were too jealous of their privileges to admit of hereditary succession. For an hundred and sixty years the race of the Jagellons sat on the throne of Poland, with as regular a succession as the Plantagenets of England; and the dynasty of the Piasts enjoyed the government for four hundred years; but all the efforts of the monarchs of these houses were unequal to the formation of a regular government. Contrary to what obtained in every other part of the world, it was always the great Kings of Poland who were ultimately overthrown; and their reigns which were the most stormy of its annals.

Liberty and Equality the Early Principles of the People.

The supreme authority, which elsewhere in the progress of civilization, was strengthened by the spoils of feudal power, became in Poland only weakened by the lapse of time. All the efforts of

No Hereditary Offices admitted in the Nobility.

aggrandizement of their greatest monarchs, were shattered against the compact, independent, and courageous body of nobles, whom the crown could neither overawe by menaces, nor subdue by violence. In the plenitude of their democratic spirit, they would for long admit no distinction among themselves, but that which arose from actual employment; and never recognised, till a very recent period, the titles and honours which, in other states, have long been hereditary. Even when they were established, the jurisdictions were only for life. Their waywods, or military chieftains, their palatines, or leaders of counties, their castellans, or governors of castles, enjoyed, from the earliest period down to recent times, their authority for that period only. These officers, far from being able in Poland, as in other states, to render their dignities hereditary, were not always even nominated by the King. Their authority, especially that of the palatines, gave equal umbrage to the monarchs whom they were bound to obey, as the nobles whom they were intended to lead. There was thus authority and power nowhere in the state. The kings of the Piasts made frequent and able efforts to create a gradation of rank in the midst of that democracy, and a body of burghers by the side of these nobles; but all their attempts proved ineffectual. A race of monarchs, whose succession was frequently

(1) *Salv. i. 84, 85.*

interrupted, and authority always contested, could not carry on any systematic plan of government; while, unlike all other states, it was the people who there maintained a systematic and uniform line of conduct (1).

The crown of Poland, though enjoyed long by the great families of the Jagellons and the Piasts, has always been elective. The King enjoyed the disposal of all offices in the republic; and a principal part of his duty consisted in going from province to province to administer justice in person.

Crown ultimately became Elective.

"By my faith," said Henry of Valois, when elected to the throne, "these Poles have made me nothing but a judge!" But the nobility themselves carried into execution all his sentences with their own armed force. The command of the armies was not in general conferred upon the sovereign; and as there never was any considerable standing army in the service of the republic, the military force of the throne was altogether nugatory (2).

But the insurmountable evil, which in every age has opposed the formation of a regular government in this unhappy country, was the privilege, too firmly established to be ever shaken, which all the citizens had, of assembling together to deliberate on the affairs of the state. So far from adopting the prudent maxim of all regular governments, that a civil war is the greatest of evils, they have by this institution given to their insurrections a legal form.

From generation to generation the maxim has been handed down by the Poles:—"Burn your houses, and wander over the country with your arms in your hand, rather than submit to the smallest infringement on your liberties." These assemblies, when once met, united in themselves the powers of all the magistrates; they were to that republic what the dictatorship was to ancient Rome. A Pole, compelled to submit to a plurality of suffrages, would consider himself subjected to the most grievous despotism; and consequently no resolution of the Diet was binding, unless it was unanimously agreed to by all the citizens. Any citizen, by the privilege

General Assemblies of the People.

of the *liberum veto*, had the power of dissolving the most numerous of these assemblies, or negating their most important acts; and although the Poles were fully sensible of the ruinous nature of this privilege, and pursued with eternal maledictions the individual who exercised it, yet they never could be prevailed upon to abandon it (3).

The Liberum Veto.

These assemblies, so famous in Polish history, so fatal to her inhabitants, presented so extraordinary a spectacle, that it is hardly possible, in reading even the most authentic descriptions of them, to believe that we have not stepped into the regions of Eastern romance. The Plain of Volo, to the west of Warsaw, says Salvandy, had been the theatre, from the earliest times, of the popular elections. Soon the impatient *pospolite* covered that vast extent with its waves, like an army prepared to commence an assault on a fortified town. The innumerable piles of arms; the immense tables round which faction united its supporters; a thousand jousts with the javelin or the lance; a thousand squadrons engaged in mimic war; a thousand parties of palatines, governors of castles, and other dignified authorities, who traversed the ranks distributing exhortations, party songs, and largesses; a thousand cavalcades of gentlemen, who rode, according to custom, with their battle-axes by their sides, and discussed at the gallop the dearest interests of the republic; innumerable

(1) Rulh. i. 5, 14, 24. Salv. i. 71, 72, 128.

(2) Rulh. i. 17, 18, 19.

(3) Rulh. i. 18, 24. Salv. i. 111.

merable quarrels, originating in drunkenness, and terminating in blood: Such were the scenes of tumult, amusement, and war,—a faithful mirror of Poland,—which, as far as the eye could reach, filled the plain.

The arena was closed in by a vast circle of tents, which embraced, as in an immense girdle, the plain of Volo, the shores of the Vistula, and the spires of Warsaw. The horizon seemed bounded by a range of snowy mountains, of which the summits were portrayed in the hazy distance by their dazzling whiteness. Their camp formed another city, with its markets, its gardens, its hotels, and its monuments. There the great displayed their Oriental magnificence; the nobles, the palatines, vied with each other in the splendour of their horses and equipage; and the stranger who beheld for the first time that luxury, worthy of the last and greatest of the Nomade people, was never weary of admiring the immense hotels, the porticoes, the colonnades, the galleries of painted or gilded stuffs, the castles of cotton and silk, with their drawbridges, towers, and ditches (1).

On the day of the elections the three orders mounted on horseback. The princes, the palatines, the bishops, the prelates, proceeded towards the plain of Volo, surrounded by eighty thousand mounted citizens, any one of whom might, at the expiry of a few hours, find himself King of Poland. They all bore in their countenances, even under the livery or banners of a master, the pride arising from that ruinous privilege. The European dress nowhere appeared on that solemn occasion. The children of the desert strove to bide the furs and skins in which they were clothed under chains of gold and the glitter of jewels. Their bonnets were composed of panther-skin; plumes of eagles or herons surmounted them: on their front were the most splendid precious stones. Their robes of sable or ermine were bound with velvet or silver: their girdle studded with jewels; over all their furs were suspended chains of diamonds. One hand of each nobleman was without a glove; on it was the splendid ring on which the arms of his family were engraved; the mark, as in ancient Rome, of the equestrian order; another proof of the intimate connexion between the race, the customs, and the traditions of the northern tribes, and the founders of the Eternal City.

But nothing in this rivalry of magnificence could equal the splendour of their arms. Double poniards, double scymitars, set with brilliants; bucklers of costly workmanship, battle-axes enriched in silver, and glittering with emeralds and sapphires; bows and arrows richly gilt, which were borne at festivals, in remembrance of the ancient customs of the country, were to be seen on every side. The horses shared in this melange of barbarism and refinement; sometimes cased in iron, at others decorated with the richest colours, they bent under the weight of the sabres, the lances, and javelins by which the senatorial order marked their rank. The bishops were distinguished by their grey or green hats, and yellow or red pantaloons, magnificently embroidered with divers colours. Often they laid aside their pastoral habits, and signalized their address as young cavaliers, by the beauty of their arms, and the management of their horses. In that crowd of the equestrian order, there was no gentleman so humble as not to try to rival this magnificence. Many carried, in furs and arms, their whole fortunes on their backs. Numbers had sold their votes to some of the candidates, for the vanity of appearing with some additional ornament before their fellow-citizens.

(1) *Salv. ii. 180.*

And the people, whose dazzled eyes beheld all this magnificence, were almost without clothing; their long beards, naked legs, and filth, indicated, even more strongly than their pale visages and dejected air, all the miseries of servitude (1).

Representative System never thoroughly established. At length the utter impossibility of getting any thing done with these immense assemblies of 100,000 citizens on horseback, and the experienced difficulty of finding them subsistence for any considerable time, led to the introduction, to a certain extent, of the representative system. This change took place in the year 1467, about two hundred years after it had been established in England, and a hundred and eighty after its introduction into Germany. Unfortunately, however, it never prevailed generally in the kingdom, and was accompanied with such restrictions as tended to increase rather than diminish the divisions of the people. The labouring classes were not at all represented; and the nobility never abandoned, and frequently exercised their rights of assembling in person on all important occasions. These general diets being, after this change, rarer, were more generally attended; and, as they were assembled only on extraordinary occasions, as the election of a King, or a question of peace or war, the passions of the people were increased by the importance of their suffrages, and inexperience added to the sudden intoxication of absolute power (2).

Pledges universally exacted from the Deputies. In the true spirit of their democratic institutions, the Poles had no sooner established a representative system, than they surrounded it with such checks, as not only rendered it totally useless, but positively hurtful. Not unfrequently the electors, terrified at the powers with which they had invested their representatives, hastened, sword in hand, to the place of their meeting, prepared, if necessary, to oppose open force to the laws. These stormy assemblages were called "Diets under the buckler." The representatives continued in the new assemblies, the ruinous law of unanimity, in spite of the advice of the wisest men, and in opposition to their continual remonstrances. This power of course was more fully exercised by one among four hundred deputies, who was intrusted with the interest of an extensive palatinate, than by an insulated individual amidst an hundred thousand of his fellow-citizens. The check, too, which the terror of being massacred, imposed upon the exercise of this right in the primary assemblies, was removed when, in the Chamber of Deputies, uplifted sabres were no longer ready to exterminate the recusant. Moreover the electors, with the jealousy of the democratic spirit, uniformly exacted from every representative a pledge how he was to vote on every question that came before the Assembly; and after every session held what they called *post comitial diets*, the object of which was to call him to account for the vote he had given on every occasion. In these diets they ran the most imminent risk of being massacred, if they had deviated at all from the instructions they had received (3).

The sense of this danger made the deputies adhere strictly to the orders they had received; and as their instructions were extremely various, the practical result was, that unanimity was impossible, and business could not be carried through. To avoid this, the majority, in some instances, proceeded by main force to pass measures in spite of the minority; but, as this was

(1) Salv. ii. 190—197.

(2) Rulh. i. 23. Salv. i. 110, 113.

(3) Rulh. i. 24—26. Salv. i. 114.

deemed a direct violation of the constitution, it invariably led to civil war. Confederations of the minorities were established, diets appointed, marshals elected, and these deplorable factions, which alternately had the king a chief and a captive, were regarded as a constitutional mode of extricating the rights of the people. This right of opposition, in the space of two centuries, had the effect of utterly annihilating every other power in the government. The deputies, without ever having made a direct attack upon the throne; without ever having attempted to wrest from the king or the senate the power allotted to them in the constitution, succeeded at length in suspending and neutralizing every other branch of the Legislature. The popular attachment to the veto augmented with the progress of wealth, and the increasing opulence of the great families who composed the senate; as it reduced all the citizens, at least on some occasions, to a state of perfect equality. The only astonishing thing is, that, with such institutions, the valour of the Polish nobility should so long have concealed the weakness arising from their unruly disposition; one would imagine, that a people with such a government could not exist a year, and yet they seemed never wearied either of victories or folly (1).

Great increase of the Democratic Power at the close of the Sixteenth Century.

The political crisis which, at the close of the sixteenth century, convulsed all Europe, reinstated the Poles at once in all their ruinous democratic privileges, which the influence of their preceding monarchs had somewhat impaired. In the year 1573, on the death of the last race of the Jagellons, the nation at once reasserted and obtained all its original immunities. The command of the armies, and the administration of justice, were taken from the crown; two hetmans appointed, one for Lithuania, and one for Poland; each invested with an absolute command over the forces of these rival provinces of the republic, and too often, by their jealousies, marred the effect of their most glorious triumphs; while the administration of justice was vested in great supreme tribunals composed of the nobility, who were changed every fifteen months, by new elections, as if to prevent justice ever being administered by those who had any acquaintance with law. Two standing armies were appointed, one for Lithuania, the other for Poland; but hardly amounting in all to ten thousand men; and even for these, the jealousy of the nobility would only permit them to vote the most scanty supplies, which required to be renewed at each successive diet. In consequence of this circumstance, the Poles never had an army on which they could rely, worthy either of the name or the strength of the republic. Their forces were composed of five parts; the national troops, or a small body of regular soldiers paid and equipped by the republic; the *pospolite*, or general assembly of all the free citizens on horseback; the armed valets, whose rapine in general did more harm than their courage did service; the artillery, which was generally in the most wretched condition; and the mercenaries, composed chiefly of Germans, whose services would have been of great importance, had their fidelity been secured by regularity of pay. The whole body of the *pospolite*, the volunteers, the *valets d'armée*, and a large portion of the mercenaries and national troops, served on horseback. The heavy cavalry, in particular, constituted the strength of the armies; there were to be found united, riches, splendour, and number. They were divided into cuirassiers and hussars; the

Forces of the Republic.

(1) Rulh. i. 26, 27. Salv. i. 115.

former clothed in steel, man and horse bearing casque and cuirass, lance and sabre, bows and carbines; the latter defended only by a twisted hauberk, which descended from the head, over the shoulders and breast, and armed with a sabre and pistol. Both were distinguished by the splendour of their dress and equipage, and the number and costly array of their mounted servants, accoutred in the most bizarre manner, with huge black plumes, and skins of bears and other wild beasts. It was the boast of this body, that they were composed of men, all measured, as they expressed it, by the same standard; that is, equally enjoying the rights to obey only their God and their swords, and equally destined, perhaps, to step one day into the throne of the Piasts and the Jagellons; and that if the heaven itself were to fall, they would support it on the point of their lances. The hussars and cuirassiers were called *Towarzisz*, that is, companions; they called each other by that name, and they were designated in the same way by the sovereign, whose chief boast would be *Primus inter pares*, the first among equals (1).

But all these forces were in general in the most miserable state of destitution. The regular army, almost always without pay, was generally without discipline, and totally destitute of every kind of equipment; the castles and fortified towns had no other defences but walls, which age had almost everywhere reduced to ruin; the arsenals were in general empty; all those great establishments, which in other states bespeak the constant vigilance of government, were wanting. Poland had no other resource but those armed confederations, which, nevertheless, frequently saved the republic in the midst of the greatest perils; and more than once, through the unconquerable valour of the nobles, preserved the liberties of Europe from the Ottoman power (2).

The physical situation of the Poles was singularly ill calculated to arrest the course of these disorders. Placed on the frontiers of European civilization; removed from the sea, or any commercial intercourse with other states, they had to maintain a constant and perilous war with the hordes who threatened Christendom, from the deserts of Asia. Their history is one uninterrupted series of desperate contests with the Muscovites, the Tartars, and the Turks; in the course of which they were repeatedly brought to the brink of ruin, and saved only by those desperate efforts which distinguished the Polish history from that of all other states in modern times. The frequency and murderous nature of these conflicts, blighted every attempt at rural industry, and chained the nation, even in recent times, to those irregular, and warlike habits, which had been abandoned centuries before, in all the other monarchies of Europe. Religious fury added grievously to these disastrous struggles, and the revolt of the Cossacks of the Ukraine, consequent on the schism between the Greek and the Catholic church, brought the republic to the verge of destruction, and finally led to the incorporation of their vast territory with the Moscovite dominion (3).

Weakened in this manner in these contests with their enemies, equally by their freedom as their tyranny, knowing of liberty nothing but its licentiousness, of government but its weakness; inferior to all around them, not less in numbers than in discipline, the Poles were the only warlike nation in the world to whom victory never brought either conquests or peace. Unceasing combats with the Germans, the Hungarians, the Muscovites,

Their long  
and desperate  
Wars  
with the  
Asiatic  
Tribes.

(1) Salv. i. 125, 129. Rulh. i. 30, 33.

(2) Rulh. i. 50.

(3) Rulh. i. 36, 38, 64.

the Pirates of the North, all of whom regarded the republic as a common prey, fill their annals. They successively saw Bohemia, Mecklenburg, Moravia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, Silesia, the Ukraine, and Red Russia, melt away from their dominion, without ever once thinking of establishing such a steady government as might secure the various parts of their vast possessions. Incapable of foresight, they saw their neighbours daily increasing in strength, without making any efforts to keep pace with their progress. Blindly attached to their customs, they were destined to drink to the dregs the bitter consequences of a pitiless aristocracy, and a senseless equality (1).

Their weakness early suggested the idea of Disembodiment to the adjoining States.

For centuries before their partition at the close of the eighteenth century, the distracted state, and experienced weakness of the Polish republic had suggested to the neighbouring powers the project of dividing its territory. Authentic documents demonstrate that this design was seriously entertained in the time of Louis XIV, and postponed only in consequence of the vast reputation, and heroic character, of John Sobieski, which prolonged the existence of the republic for a hundred years, and threw a ray of glory over its declining fortunes. Of the powers whose unworthy alliance effected the destruction of the oldest republic in the world, all had arisen out of its ruins, or been spared by its arms. Prussia, long a province of Poland, had grown out of the spoils of its ancient ruler (2); Austria owed to the intervention of a Polish hero its deliverance from the sword of the Mussulman; and long before the French eagles approached the Kremlin, a Polish army had conquered Moscow; and the conflagration of that great capital was but the repetition of what five centuries before had been effected by the vengeance of the Polish nobility (3).

Nothing can so strongly demonstrate the wonderful power of democracy as a spring, and its desolating effects, when not compressed by a firm regulator, as the history of John Sobieski. The force which this illustrious champion of Christendom could bring into the field to defend his country from Mahomedan invasion, seldom amounted to fifteen thousand men; and when, previous to the battle of Kotzim, he found himself, by an extraordinary effort, at the head of forty thousand, of whom hardly one-half were well disciplined, the unusual spectacle inspired him with such confidence, that he hesitated not to attack eighty thousand Turkish veterans, strongly intrenched, and gained the greatest victory which had been achieved by the Christian arms since the battle of Ascalon. The troops which he led to the deliverance of Vienna were only eighteen thousand native Poles, and the combined Christian army only numbered seventy thousand combatants; yet with this force he routed 300,000 Turkish soldiers; and broke the Mussulman power so effectually, that for the first time, for three hundred years, the crescent of Mahomet permanently receded, and from that period historians date the decline of the Ottoman empire. Yet, after these glorious triumphs, the ancient divisions of the republic paralysed its strength,

General Exploits of John Sobieski.

(1) *Salv.* i. 74,

(2) *Salv.* i. 136, and ii. 236. *Rulb.* i. 59, 60.

(3) This fearful catastrophe is thus described in the contemporary annals. "What words can adequately paint the deplorable state to which Moscow was thus reduced. That populous capital, resplendent with riches and numbers, was annihilated in a single day. There remains only smoking ruins; piles covered with ashes and drenched with blood: You see nothing but corpses and churches

sacked or half-devoured by the flames. The awful silence of death is interrupted only by the pitiable lamentations of unhappy wretches covered with wounds, a prey to all the agonies of prolonged torture." Is this the description of Moscow in 1382 or 1812, when sacked and destroyed by the Jagellons or Napoléon? Singular destiny of a capital to have been twice the victim of such a catastrophe. See *Karamsin. Hist. de Russie*, v. 101.



the defence of the frontiers was again intrusted to a few thousand undisciplined horsemen; and the Polish nation had the disgrace of allowing its heroic King, the deliverer of Christendom (1), to be besieged for months, with fifteen thousand men, by innumerable hordes of barbarians, before the tardy *pospolite* would advance to his relief.

Sobieski, worn out with his ineffectual endeavours to create a regular government, or establish a permanent force for the protection of Poland, clearly foresaw the future fate of the republic. Before his accession to the throne, he had united with the Primate and sixteen hundred of its principal citizens to overturn the phantom of equality (2) with which they were perpetually opposed, and, to use his own words, "Rescue the republic from the insane tyranny of a plebeian noblesse." His reign was one incessant struggle with the principles of anarchy which were implanted in his dominions; and he at length sunk under the experienced impossibility of remedying them. The aged hero, when approaching the grave, to which the ingratitude and dissensions of his subjects accelerated his latter years, expressed himself to the senate in these memorable and prophetic terms:—"He was well acquainted with the griefs of the soul, who declared, that small distresses love to declare themselves, but great are silent. The world will be mute with amazement at the contemplation of us and our councils. Nature herself will be astonished! that beneficent Parent has gifted every living creature with the instinct of self-preservation, and given the most inconsiderable animals arms for their defence: we alone in the universe turn ours against ourselves. That instinct is taken from us, not by any resistless force, not by an inevitable destiny, but by a voluntary insanity, by our own passions, by the desire of mutual destruction. Alas! what will one day be the mournful surprise of posterity to find, that from the summit of glory, from the period when the Polish name filled the universe, our country has fallen into ruins, and fallen, alas, for ever! I have been able to gain for you victories; but I feel myself unable to save you from yourselves. Nothing remains to be done but to place in the hands, not of destiny, for I am a Christian, but of a powerful and beneficent Deity, the fate of my beloved country. Believe me, the eloquence of your tribunes, instead of being turned against the throne, would be better directed against those who, by their disorders, are bringing down upon our country the cry of the prophet, which I, alas! hear too clearly rolling over our heads, 'yet forty years and Nineveh will be no more (3).'"

The anticipation of the hero was not exactly accomplished, his own glories, despite the insanity of his subjects, prolonged the existence of Poland for nearly an hundred years. But succeeding events proved every day more clearly the truth of his prediction. His posthumous conquest of the frontier town of Kamieck from the Turks, was the last triumph of the republic. He was also its last national sovereign, and the last who possessed any estimation in the world. With him disappeared both its power and its ascendancy among other nations. From that period, successive foreign armies invaded its provinces, and invaded it never to retire. By turns the Saxons, Swedes, Moscovites, Imperialists, and Prussians, ruled

With him the Polish Power was extinguished.

(1) *Salv.* iii. 61. and ii. 137, 141, 372, 454. *Ruth.* i. 56.

(2) Letter, Sobieski to Louis XIV. July 14, 1672. *Ruth.* i. 53.

(3) *Salv.* iii. 375, 377.

its destinies; Poland was no more; according to his own prophecy, it descended into the tomb with the greatest of his sons (1).

Never did a people exhibit a more extraordinary spectacle than the Poles after this period. Two factions were for ever at war: both had to espouse and defend their interests an army; but it was a foreign army, a conquering army, an army conquering without a combat. The inferior noblesse introduced the Saxons; the greater called in the Swedes; from the day in which Sobieski closed his eyes, strangers never ceased to reign in Poland; its national forces were continually diminishing, and at length totally disappeared. The reason is, that a nation without subjects, is speedily exhausted; the republic at length, composed only of 100,000 citizens, had no more blood to shed even in civil war. No encounters thereafter took place but between the Swedish, German, or Russian forces; their struggles resembled more the judicial combat of the feudal ages than the contests of powerful nations. The factions of the republic, united on one side round the Swedish, on the other round the Saxon banners, exchanged notes and summonses like belligerent powers. By degrees blood ceased to flow; in these internal divisions, gold was found more effectual than the sword; and to the disgrace of Poland, its later years sunk under the debasement of foreign corruption (2).

Pursued to the grave by the phantom of equality, the dissensions of Poland became more violent as it approached its dissolution. The exercise of the *liberum veto* became more frequent every year; it was no longer produced by the vehemence of domestic strife, but by the influence of external corruption. That single word plunged the republic, as if by enchantment, into a lethargic sleep, and every time it was pronounced, it fell for two years into a state of absolute inanition. Faction even went so far as to dissolve the diets, in their first sittings, and render their convocation a mere vain formality. All the branches of the government immediately ceased to be under any control; the treasury, the army, the civil authority, released from all control, fell into a state of anarchy. Nothing similar to this ever occurred in any other people. The legislative power succeeded in destroying itself; and no other power ever ventured to supply its place. The executive, parceled out into many independent and hostile divisions, was incapable of effecting such an usurpation, and if it had, the right of the nation to assemble in open confederation, would immediately have rendered it nugatory (3).

When the adjoining states of Russia and Austria, therefore, effected the first partition of Poland, in 1772, they did not require to conquer a kingdom, but only to take each a share of a state which had fallen to pieces. The election of Stanislaus Poniatowski, in 1764, to the throne of Poland, took place literally under the buckler; but it was under the buckler of the Moscovite, the Cossack, and the Tartar, who overshadowed the plain of Volo with their arms; last and fatal consequence of centuries of anarchy! In vain did the Poles, taught at length by woful experience, attempt, by the advice of Czartoriski, to abandon the fatal privilege of the *liberum veto*; the despots of Russia and Prussia declared that they took the liberties of Poland, and that important right in particular, under their peculiar protection, and perpetuated a privilege which secured their conquest of the kingdom. The inferior noblesse had the madness to invoke the aid of the Empress Catherine,

(1) Salv. iii. 455.

(2) Salv. iii. 479. Rulh. i. 62, 63.

(3) Rulh. i. 63.



to maintain their ancient privileges against what they called the tyranny of the aristocracy; and Poland, invaded by the two greatest monarchies of Europe, was deprived of the aid of the greater part of its own subjects. The higher nobility, the clergy, the real patriots, made generous efforts, but all in vain; the insane people refused to second them, and one-half of Poland was lost in the struggle (1).

When too late they abandon their ruinous Democratic Privileges. The terrible lesson was not received in vain. Taught by the dismemberment of their territory, what remained of Poland strove to amend their institutions; the *liberum veto* was abandoned, and the nobles themselves, taking the lead in the work of reformation, made a voluntary surrender of their privileges for the public good. The example of the French Revolution had penetrated the wilds of Sarmatia, and a new era seemed to open upon the world from its example. On the 3d May, 1791, a constitution, founded upon the hereditary descent of the throne, the abolition of the *liberum veto*, religious toleration, the emancipation of the bourgeois, and the progressive enfranchisement of the serfs, was proclaimed at Warsaw, amidst the tears of joy of a people who hoped that they had at last found a period to their long misfortunes (2).

The Polish reform was so different from the French, that it would seem as if it was expressly set down by Providence to afford a contrast to that bloody convulsion, and deprive the partitioning powers of a shadow even of justice in the mournful catastrophe which followed. "In contemplating that change," says Mr. Burke, "humanity has every thing to rejoice and glory in, nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to suffer. So far as it has gone, it is probably the most pure public good ever yet conferred on mankind. Anarchy and servitude were at once removed; a throne strengthened for the protection of the people, without trenching on their liberties; foreign cabal abolished, by changing the crown from elective to hereditary; a reigning king, from a heroic love to his country, exerted himself in favour of a family of strangers, as if it had been his own. Ten millions of men were placed in a way to be freed gradually, and therefore to themselves safely, not from civil or political chains, which, bad as they are, only fetter the mind, but from substantial personal bondage. Inhabitants of cities, before without privileges, were placed in the consideration which belongs to that improved and connecting situation of social life. One of the most numerous, proud, and fierce bodies of nobility in the world, was arranged only in the foremost rank of free citizens. All from the king to the labourer were improved in their condition; every thing was kept in its place and order, but in that place and order every thing was bettered. Not one drop of blood was spilled, no treachery, no outrage; no slander more cruel than the sword; no studied insults on religion, morals, or manners; no spoil or confiscation, no citizen beggared, none imprisoned, none exiled; but the whole was effected with a policy, a discretion, an unanimity and secrecy, such as have never before been known on any occasion (3)."

But it was too late. The powers which environed Poland were too strong, the weakness entailed on it by its long anarchy too great, to admit of its being restored to the rank of an independent power. Like many men who discover the error of their ways when on the verge of the grave, they had continued the passions of their youth down to the period when amendment is

(1) Salv. iii. 498.

(2) Salv. iii. 500.

(3) Burke, Appeal to Old Whigs, Works, vi. 244, 245.

fruitless and repentance too late. Had they abandoned their democratic contentions in the days of Sobieski, the state might have recovered its ascendancy; in the days of Catherine, it was no longer practicable (1).

Commence-  
ment of  
their last  
struggle.

The last struggles of the Poles, like all their preceding ones, originated in their own divisions. The partisans of the ancient anarchy revolted against the new and more stable constitution which they had recently received; they took up arms at Targowice, and invoked the aid of the Empress to restore the disorder from which she had gained so much. A second Oct. 14, 1793. dismemberment speedily took place, and in the disordered state of the country, it was effected without opposition. Prussia and Russia took upon themselves alone the execution of this partition, and the combined troops were in the first instance quietly cantoned in the provinces which they had seized. The Russian General Igelstroem was stationed at Warsaw, and occupied all the inconsiderable portion of the Republic still left to Stanislaus. Soltikoff had under his orders a powerful corps in Wolhinia and Podolia. Suwarow, with a considerable corps, was placed at Cherson, to overawe both the Turks and the southern provinces, while a large Prussian corps was ready to support Igelstroem, and had already seized upon the northern parts of the country. Thus Poland, distracted and paralysed, without fortified towns, mountains, or defensible positions, was overrun by the armies of two of the most powerful military monarchies in Europe (2).

Poles take  
up arms  
from de-  
spair, and  
elect Kos-  
ciusko as a  
Leader.

There is a certain degree of calamity which overwhelms the courage; but there is another, which by reducing men to desperation, leads to the greatest and most glorious enterprises. To this latter state the Poles were now reduced. Abandoned by all the world, distracted with internal divisions, destitute alike of fortresses and resources, crushed in the grasp of gigantic enemies, the patriots of that unhappy country, consulting only their own courage, resolved to make a last effort to deliver it from its enemies. In the midst of their internal distractions, and through all the prostration of their national strength, the Poles had never lost their individual courage, or the ennobling feeling of civil independence. They were still the redoubtable hussars who broke the Mussulman ranks under the walls of Vienna, and carried the Polish eagles in triumph to the towers of the Kremlin, whose national cry had so often made the Osmanlis tremble, and who had boasted, in their hours of triumph, that if the heaven itself were to fall, they would support it on the point of their lances. A band of patriots at Warsaw resolved at all hazards to attempt the restoration of their independence, and they made choice of Kosciusko, who was then at Leipsic, to direct their efforts (3).

This illustrious hero, who had received the rudiments of military education in France, had afterwards served, not without glory, in the ranks of independence in America. Uniting to Polish enthusiasm French ability, the ardent friend of liberty, and the enlightened advocate for order, brave, loyal, and generous, he was in every way qualified to head the last struggle of the oldest republic in existence for its national independence. But a nearer approach to the scene of danger convinced him that the hour for action had not yet arrived. The passions, indeed, were awakened, the national enthusiasm was full, but the means of resistance were inconsiderable, and the old divisions

(1) Salv. iii. 501.

(2) Jom. vi. 257, 258. Salv. iii. 501.

(3) Salv. iii. 92. Jom. vi. 260.

of the republic were not so healed as to afford the prospect of the whole national strength being exerted in its defence. But the public indignation could brook no delay; several regiments stationed at Pultusk revolted, and moved towards Galicia; and Kosciusko, determined not to be absent in the hour of danger, hastened to Cracow, where, on the 3d March, he closed the gates, and proclaimed the insurrection (1).

He Defeats the Russians at Raslowice. Having, by means of the regiments which had revolted, and the junction of some bodies of armed peasants, imperfectly armed indeed, but full of enthusiasm, collected a force of five thousand men, Kosciusko left Cracow, and boldly advanced into the open country. April 8, 1794. He encountered a body of three thousand Russians at Raslowice, and after an obstinate engagement, succeeded in routing it with great slaughter. This action, inconsiderable in itself, had important consequences; the Polish peasants exchanged their scythes for the arms found on the field of battle, and the insurrection, encouraged by this first gleam of success, soon communicated itself to the adjoining provinces. In vain Stanislaus disavowed the acts of his subjects; the flame of independence spread with the rapidity of lightning, and soon all the freemen in Poland were in arms (2).

Warsaw is taken by the Insurgents. Warsaw was the first point where the flame broke out. The intelligence of the success at Raslowice was received there on the 12th April, and occasioned the most violent agitation. For some days afterwards it was evident that an explosion was at hand; and at length, at April 17. daybreak, on the morning of the 17th, the brigade of Polish guards, under the direction of their officers, attacked the Governor's house and the Arsenal, and was speedily joined by the populace. The Russian and Prussian troops in the neighbourhood of the capital were about seven thousand men; and after a prolonged and obstinate contest in the streets for thirty-six hours, they were driven across the Vistula with the loss of above three thousand men in killed and prisoners, and the flag of independence was hoisted on the towers of Warsaw (3).

Poles in the Russian Army Disarmed. One of the most embarrassing circumstances in the situation of the Russians was the presence of above sixteen thousand Poles in their ranks, who were known to sympathize strongly with these heroic efforts of their fellow-citizens. Orders were immediately despatched to Suwarrow, to assemble a corps, and disarm the Polish troops scattered in Podolia, before they could unite in any common measures for their defence. By the energy and rapidity of this great commander, the Poles were disarmed brigade after brigade, and above twelve thousand men reduced to a state of inaction without much difficulty—a most important operation, not only by destroying the nucleus of a powerful army, but stifling the commencement of the insurrection in Wolhinia and Podolia. How different might have been the fate of Poland and Europe had they been enabled to join the ranks of their countrymen (4).

Great exertions of Kosciusko, and his Countrymen. Kosciusko and his countrymen did every thing that courage or energy could suggest to put on foot a formidable force to resist their adversaries; a provisional government was established, and in a short time forty thousand men were raised. But this force, though highly honourable to the patriotism of the Poles, was inconsiderable when compared

(1) Jom. vi. 263. Toul. v. 88.

(2) Jom. vi. 264, 265. Lac. xii. 269.

(3) Jom. vi. 266, 269. Lac. xii. 271. Hard. i. 472.

(4) Jom. vi. 271.

with the vast armies which Russia and Prussia could advance for their subjugation. Small as the army was, its maintenance was too great an effort for the resources of the kingdom, which, torn by intestine faction, without commerce, harbours, or manufactures, having no national credit, and no industrious class of citizens but the Jews, now felt the fatal effects of its long career of anarchy. The population of the country, composed entirely of unruly gentlemen, and ignorant serfs, was totally unable at that time to furnish those numerous supplies of intelligent officers which are requisite for the formation of an efficient military force; while the nobility, however formidable on horseback in the Hungarian or Turkish wars, were less to be relied on, in a contest with regular forces, where infantry and artillery constituted the great strength of the army, and courage was unavailing without the aid of science (1).

Want of a large Regular Force proved fatal to him. The central position of Poland, in the midst of its enemies, would have afforded great military advantages, had they possessed a force capable of turning it to account; that is, if they had had 150,000 regular troops, which the population of the country could easily have maintained, and a few well fortified towns to arrest the enemy in one quarter, while the bulk of the national force was precipitated upon them in another. The glorious stand made by the nation in 1831, with only thirty thousand regular troops at the commencement of the insurrection, and no other fortifications than those of Warsaw and Modlin, proves what immense advantages this central position affords; and what opportunities it offers to military genius like that of SKRYNIECKI, to inflict the most severe wounds even on a superior and well-conducted antagonist. But all the advantage were awaiting to Kosciusko; and it augments our admiration of his talent, and of the heroism of his countrymen, that, with such inconsiderable means, they made so honourable a stand for their national independence.

Russians and Prussians move against Warsaw. No sooner was the King of Prussia informed of the Revolution at Warsaw, than he moved forward at the head of thirty thousand men to besiege that city; while Suwarrow, with forty thousand veterans, was preparing to enter the south-eastern parts of the kingdom. Aware of the necessity of striking a blow before the enemy's forces were united, Kosciusko advanced with twelve thousand men to attack the Russian General Denisoff; but, upon approaching his corps, he discovered that it had united to the army commanded by the King in person. Unable to face such superior forces, he immediately retired, but was attacked next morning at daybreak near Schkoczyn, by the Allies, and after a gallant resistance, his army was routed, and Cracow fell into the hands of the conquerors. This check was the more severely felt, as, about the same time General Zayonschuk was defeated at Chelne, and obliged to recross the Vistula, leaving the whole country on the right bank of that river in the hands of the Russians (2).

These disasters produced a great impression at Warsaw; the people as usual ascribed them to treachery, and insisted that the leaders should be brought to punishment; and although the chiefs escaped, several persons in an inferior situation were arrested and thrown into prison. Apprehensive of some subterfuge, if the accused were regularly brought to trial, the people assembled in tumultuous bodies, forced the prisons, erected scaffolds in the streets, and, after the manner of the assassins of September 2, put above

(1) Jom. vi. 273.

(2) Jom. vi. 274, 276. Lac. xii. 272.

twelve persons to death with their own hands. These excesses penetrated with the most profound grief, the pure heart of Kosciusko; he flew to the capital, restored order, and delivered over to punishment the authors of the revolt. But the resources of the country were evidently unequal to the struggle; the paper money was at a frightful discount; and the sacrifices required of the nation were the more severely felt, that now hardly a hope of ultimate success remained (1).

The combined Russian and Prussian armies, about thirty-five thousand strong, now advanced against the capital, where Kosciusko occupied an intrenched camp, with twenty-five thousand men. Buring the whole of July and August, the besiegers were engaged in fruitless attempts to drive the Poles into the City; and at length a great convoy, with artillery and stores for a regular siege, which was ascending the Vistula, having been captured by a gentleman named Minewsky, at the head of a body of peasants, the King of Prussia raised the siege, leaving a portion of his sick and stores in the hand of the patriots (2).

After this success, the Poles mustered nearly eighty thousand men under arms; but they were scattered over too extensive a line of country, in order to make head against their numerous enemies; a policy tempting by the prospect it holds forth of exciting an extensive insurrection, but ruinous in the end, by exposing the patriotic forces to the risk of being beaten in detail. Scarcely had the Poles recovered from their intoxication at the raising the siege of Warsaw, when intelligence was received of the defeat of Sizakowsky,

Sept. 17.

Suwarrow  
defeats one  
of their  
Corps.

Sept. 19.

who commanded a corps of ten thousand men beyond the Bug, by the Russian grand army under Suwarrow. This celebrated General, to whom the principal conduct of the war was now committed, followed up his successes with the utmost vigour. The retreating column was again assailed on the 19th by the victorious Russians, and, after a glorious resistance, driven into the woods between Janow and Biala, with the loss of four thousand men and twenty-eight pieces of cannon. Scarce three thousand Poles, with Sizakowsky at their head, escaped into Siedlee (3).

Kosciusko  
is routed  
and made  
Prisoner at  
Maccowice.

Upon receiving the accounts of this disaster, Kosciusko resolved, by drawing together all his detachments, to fall upon Fersen before he joined Suwarrow, and the other corps which were advancing against the capital. With this view he ordered General Poninsky to join him, and marched with all his disposable forces to attack the Russian General, who was stationed at Maccowice; but fortune on this occasion cruelly deceived the Poles. Arrived in presence of Fersen, he found that Poninsky had not yet arrived; and the Russian commander, overjoyed at this circumstance, resolved immediately to attack him. In vain Kosciusko despatched courier after courier to Poninsky to advance to his relief. The first was intercepted by the Cossacks, and the second did not arrive in time to enable him to take a decisive part in the approaching combat. Nevertheless, the Polish commander, aware of the danger of retreating with inexperienced troops in presence of a disciplined and superior enemy, determined to give battle on the following day, and drew up his little army with as much skill as the circumstances would admit (4).

(1) Lac. xii. 272. Jom. vi. 279.

(3) Jom. vi. 283, 287.

(2) Hard. i. 474, 480. Toul. v. 89. Jom. vi. 280,

(4) Jom. vi. 290.

Oct. 4, 1794. The forces on the opposite sides, in this action, which decided the fate of Poland, were nearly equal in point of numbers; but the advantages of discipline and equipment were decisively on the side of the Russians. Kosciusko commanded about ten thousand men, a great part of whom were recently raised, and imperfectly disciplined; while Fersen was at the head of twelve thousand veterans, including a most formidable body of cavalry. Nevertheless the Poles, in the centre and right wing, made a glorious defence; but the left, which Poninsky should have supported, having been overwhelmed by the cavalry under Denisoff, the whole army was thrown into confusion. Kosciusko, Sizakowsky, and other gallant chiefs, in vain made the most heroic efforts to rally the broken troops. They were wounded, struck down, and made prisoners by the Cossacks, who inundated the field of battle, while the remains of the army, now reduced to seven thousand five hundred men, fell back in confusion towards Warsaw (1).

After the fall of Kosciusko, who sustained in his single person the fortunes of the republic, nothing but a series of disasters awaited the Poles. The Austrians, taking advantage of the general confusion, entered Galicia, and occupied the palatinates of Lublin and Landomir; while Suwarrow, pressing forward towards the capital, defeated Mokronowsky, who, at the head of twelve thousand men, strove to retard the advance of that redoubtable commander. In vain the Poles made the utmost efforts; they were routed with the loss of four thousand men; and the patriots, though now despairing of success, resolved to sell their lives dearly, and shut themselves up in Warsaw, to await the approach of the conqueror (2).

Suwarrow was soon at the gates of Praga, where twenty-six thousand men, and one hundred pieces of cannon, defended the bridge of the Vistula, and the approach to the capital. To assault such a position with forces hardly superior, was evidently a hazardous enterprise; but the approach of winter rendering it indispensable that if any thing was done at all, it should be immediately attempted, Suwarrow, who was habituated to successful assaults in the Turkish wars, resolved to storm the city. On the 2d November, the Russians made their appearance before the glacis of Praga, and Suwarrow, having, in great haste, completed three powerful batteries, and battered the defences in breach with an imposing celerity, made his dispositions for a general assault on the following day. The conquerors of Ismail advanced to the attack in the same order which they had

Nov. 4. adopted on that memorable occasion. Seven columns at daybreak approached the ramparts, rapidly filled up the ditches with their fascines, broke down the defences, and pouring into the intrenched camp, carried destruction into the ranks of the Poles. In vain the defenders did their utmost to resist the torrent. The wooden houses of Praga speedily took fire, and, amidst the shouts of the victors and the cries of the inhabitants, the Polish battalions were borne backward to the edge of the Vistula. The multitude of fugitives speedily broke down the bridges; and the citizens of Warsaw beheld, with unavailing anguish, their defenders on the other side perishing in the flames, or by the sword of the conquerors. Ten thousand soldiers fell on the spot, nine thousand were made prisoners, and above twelve thousand citizens, of every age and sex, were put to the sword,—a dreadful instance of carnage, which has left a lasting stain on the

Patriots  
shut them-  
selves up in  
Warsaw.

Storming of  
Praga and  
Warsaw by  
Suwarrow.

Atrocious  
Massacre by  
the Rus-  
sians.

(1) Toul. v. 89. Lac. xii. 274. Jom. vi. 291.

(2) Jom. vi. 292, 295. Toul. v. 89.



name of Suwarrow, and which Russia expiated in the conflagration of Moscow (1).

The tragedy was at an end; Warsaw capitulated two days afterwards; the detached parties of the patriots melted away, and Poland was no more. On the 6th November, Suwarrow made his triumphant entry into the blood-stained capital. King Stanislaus was sent into Russia, where he ended his days in captivity, and the final partition of the monarchy was effected (2).

Great sensation produced by the Fall of Warsaw in Europe. Such was the termination of the oldest republic in existence,—such the first instance of the destruction of a member of the European family by its ambitious rivals. As such it excited a profound sensation in Europe; the folly of preceding ages, the irretrievable defects of the Polish constitution, were forgotten; they were remembered only as the bulwark of Christendom against the Ottomans; they appeared only as the succouring angel under John Sobieski. To behold a people so ancient, so gallant, whose deeds were associated with such heart-stirring recollections, fall a victim to imperial ingratitude and Moscovite ambition, was a spectacle which naturally excited the utmost indignation. The bloody march of the French Revolution, the disasters consequent on domestic dissension, were forgotten, and the Christian world was penetrated with a grief akin to that felt by all civilized nations at the fall of Jerusalem.

The poet has celebrated these events in the immortal lines,—

“ Oh! bloodiest picture in the book of Time :  
Sarmatia fell unwept, without a crime ;  
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,  
Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe !  
Dropped from her nerveless grasp the shattered spear,  
Closed her bright eye, and curb'd her high career :  
Hope for a season bade the world farewell,  
And Freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell ! ”

It was the Victim of Democratic Madness and Oppression. But the truth of history must dispel the illusion, and unfold in the fall of Poland the natural consequence of its national delinquencies. Sarmatia neither fell unwept, nor without a crime; she fell the victim of her own dissensions; of the chimera of equality insantly pursued, the rigour of aristocracy unceasingly maintained; of extravagant jealousy of every superior, and merciless oppression of every inferior rank. The eldest born of the European family was the first to perish, because she had thwarted all the ends of the social union; because she united the turbulence of democratic to the exclusion of aristocratic societies; because she had the vacillation of a republic without its energy, and the oppression of a monarchy without its stability. Such a system neither could nor ought to be maintained. The internal feuds of Poland were more fatal to human happiness than the despotism of Russia, and the growth of improvement among its people as slow as among the ryots of Hindostan.

Striking contrast afforded by the steady growth of Russia. In this respect the history of Muscovy affords a striking and instructive contrast to the Polish annals. Commencing originally with a smaller territory, yet farther removed from the light of civilization, cut off in a manner from the intelligence of the globe, decidedly inferior in its earlier contests, the growth of Russia has been as steady as the decline of Poland. The Polish republic fell at length beneath a

(1) Toul. v. 89, 90. Lac. xii. 275. Jom. vi. 297, (2) Jom. vi. 299. Toul. v. 91.

power whom it had repeatedly vanquished; and its name was erased from the list of nations at the very time that its despotic rival had attained the zenith of power and glory. These facts throw a great and important light on the causes of early civilization, and the form of government adapted to a barbarous age. There cannot in such a state be so great a misfortune as a weak, there cannot be so great a blessing as a powerful government. No oppression is so severe as that which is there inflicted by the members of the same state on each other; no anarchy so irremediable as that which arises from the violence of their own passions. To restrain the fury, and coerce the dissensions of its subjects, is the first duty of government in such periods; in its inability to discharge this duty, is to be found the real cause of the weakness of a democratic, in the rude but effective performance of it, the true secret of the strength of a despotic state.

Gallant  
Spirit of the  
exiled Po-  
lish Bands.

Such are the ennobling effects of the spirit of freedom even in its wildest fits, that the remnant of the Polish nation, albeit bereft of a country by their own insanity, have by their deeds commanded the respect, and by their sorrows obtained the sympathy of the world. The remains of Kosciusko's bands, disdaining to live under Muscovite oppression, have sought and found an asylum in the armies of France; they served with distinction both in Italy and Spain, and awakened by their bravery that sympathy, which brought the Conqueror of Europe to the walls of the Kremlin. Like the remains of a noble mind borne down by suffering, they have exhibited flashes of greatness even in the extremity of disaster; and while wandering without a home, from which their madness had banished them, obtained a respect, to which their conquerors were strangers at the summit of their glory. Such is the effect even of the misdirected spirit of freedom; it dignifies and hallows all that it encircles, and, even amidst the ruins which it has occasioned, exalts the human soul!

Comparison  
of Polish  
with Eng-  
lish History.

The history of England has illustrated the beneficial effects which have resulted to its character and institutions from the Norman Conquest. In the severe suffering which followed that great event; in the anguish of generations, were laid the deep and lasting foundations of English freedom. In the checkered and disastrous history of Poland, may be traced the consequences of an opposite, and, at first sight, more fortunate destiny; of national independence uninterruptedly maintained, and purity of race unceasingly preserved. The first, in the school of early adversity, were taught the habits and learned the wisdom necessary for the guidance of maturer years; the second, like the spoiled child, whose wishes had never been coerced, nor passions restrained, at last acquired, on the brink of the grave, prematurely induced by excessive indulgence, that experience which should have been gained in earlier years. It is through this terrible, but necessary ordeal, that Poland is now passing; and the experience of ages would indeed be lost, if we did not discern in their present suffering the discipline necessary for future happiness, and in the extremity of temporary disaster, the severe school of ultimate improvement.

The partition of Poland, and scandalous conduct of the states who reaped the fruit of injustice in its fall, has been the frequent subject of just indignation, and eloquent complaint from the European historians; but the connection between that calamitous event and the subsequent disasters of the partitioning powers, has not hitherto met with due attention. Yet nothing can be clearer, than that it was this iniquitous measure which brought all the

misfortunes which followed upon the European monarchies; that it was it which opened the gates of Germany to French ambition, and brought Napoleon with his terrible legions to Vienna, Berlin, and the Kremlin. The more the campaigns of 1793 and 1794 are studied, the more clearly does it appear that it was the prospect of obtaining a share in the partition of Poland which paralysed the Allied arms, which intercepted and turned aside the legions which might have overthrown the Jacobin rule, and created that jealousy and division amongst their rulers, which more even than the energy of the Republicans, contributed to their uniform and astonishing success. Had the redoubtable bands of Catherine been added to the armies of Prussia in the plains of Champagne in 1792, or to those of Austria and England in the field of Flanders in 1793, not a doubt can remain that the revolutionary party would have been overcome, and a constitutional monarchy established in France, with the entire concurrence of three-fourths of all the respectable classes in the kingdom. Even in 1794, by a cordial co-operation of the Prussian and Austrian forces after the fall of Landrecies, the whole barrier erected by the genius of Vauban might have been captured, and the Revolution, thrown back upon its own resources, been permanently prevented from proving dangerous to the liberties of Europe. What then paralysed the Allied armies in the midst of such a career of success, and caused the campaign to close under circumstances of such general disaster? The partition of Poland, which first retained the Prussian battalions during the crisis of the campaign in sullen inactivity on the Rhine, and then led to the precipitate abandonment of Flanders by the Austrian forces.

Subsequent Punishment of the Partitioning Powers. The subsequent fate of the partitioning powers is a striking instance of that moral retribution, which, sooner or later, in nations as well as individuals, attends a flagrant act of injustice. To effect the destruction of Poland, Prussia paralysed her armies on the Rhine, and threw on Austria and England the whole weight of the contest with Republican France. She thereby permitted the growth of its military power, and the battle of Jena, the Treaty of Tilsit, and six years of bondage, were the consequence. Suwarrow entered Warsaw when its spires were yet gleaming with the fires of Praga, and when the Vistula ran red with Polish blood, and before twenty years had expired, a Polish army revenged on the Moskwa that inhuman massacre, and the sack of Warsaw was forgotten in the conflagration of Moscow. Austria withdrew from Flanders to join in the deed of iniquity, and secure in Galicia the fruits of injustice; and twice did the French guards in consequence pass in triumph through the walls of Vienna.

It was this scandalous spoliation, therefore, which opened the gates of Europe to French ambition; and when we recollect what unheard-of disasters they brought on all the partitioning powers, and most of all on Prussia, which first gave the example of this interested defection from the cause of general freedom, it is impossible not to perceive the silent but irresistible operation of the moral laws to which the conduct of nations is subjected, or to perceive in the unexampled calamities, which for twenty years afterwards desolated Europe, any thing but the natural consequence and just punishment of the greatest political crime which had been committed since the ambition of the Romans subjugated mankind.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1795.

## ARGUMENT.

Effects of the Successes of France in the preceding Campaign—Peace with Prussia—State of the Empire—Treaty of Alliance, Offensive and Defensive, between Holland and France—Fresh Treaty between Austria and England—Efforts of England to maintain the War—Her Land and Sea Forces, and Supplies—Treaty with Russia—Arguments in England against and for the War—Great increase in the Patriotic Spirit of the People—Exhausted State of France—Naval operations in the Mediterranean—Combat of La Spezia—War in the Maritime Alps—Allies at first successful—Difficult situation of the French—Their Armies, strongly reinforced, resume the Offensive—Battle of Loano—Its decisive consequences—Tactics by which it was gained by the Republicans—War in Spain—Indecisive Operations in Catalonia—Great successes of the Republicans in Biscay—Peace between France and Spain—Pacification of la Vendée—Treaty with the Insurgents—Expedition to Quiberon—Running Sea-Fight at Bellisle—Landing of the Emigrants in Quiberon Bay—Vigorous defensive Measures of Hoche—The Invaders are blockaded—Their desperate situation—Unfortunate Attempt at succour by the Chouan Chiefs—They are Repulsed—Storming of the Royalist Intrenchments—They are driven into the Sea, or Capitulate—Atrocious Cruelty of the Republicans—Noble Conduct and Death of the Royalist Prisoners—Rapid decline of the Royalist Cause in the West of France—War on the Rhine—Extreme Penury and Difficulties of the Republicans on the Rhine—State of the contending Armies—Early Inactivity of the Allies—Fall of Luxembourg—Secret Negotiations between Pichegru and the Allies—Inactivity of the Austrians on the Upper-Rhine—Republicans cross that River—Defensive Dispositions of the Austrians—Able and Vigorous Measures of Clairfait—He attacks the Lines round Mayence—Other Operations along the River—Republicans are driven from before Mannheim—Which Capitulates—Wurmser drives Pichegru to the Lines of the Queich—Maritime Operations—Results of the Campaign—Declining Affairs, and exhausted State of the Republicans—Feeble Character of the War up to this period—Great Results which might have followed a vigorous exertion of the Allied Strength, from the Lassitude of the French.

The great successes which in every quarter had signalized the conclusion of the campaign of 1794, led early in the following year to the dissolution of the Confederacy against the French Republic. The conquest of Holland determined the wavering policy of Prussia. Early in January, conferences were Jan. 22, 1795. publicly opened at Bâle, and before the end of the month the plenipotentiaries were signed. The public articles of this treaty bound the King of Prussia to live on friendly terms with the Republic, and not furnish succour to its enemies,—to leave to France the undisturbed enjoyment of its conquests on the left bank of the Rhine, leaving the equivalent to be given to Prussia to ulterior arrangement; while, on the other hand, the French government engaged to withdraw its troops from the Prussian possessions on the right bank, and not treat as enemies the states of the empire in which Prussia took an interest (1).

By the secret articles, "the King of Prussia engaged not to undertake any hostile enterprise against Holland, or any country occupied by the French troops;" an indemnity was stipulated for Prussia, in the event of France extending her frontiers to the Rhine: the Republic engaged not to carry hostilities in the empire beyond a fixed line, and in case of the Rhine being

(1) Hard. iii. 144.

permanently fixed on as the boundary of France, and including the states of Deux-Ponts, the Republic engaged to undertake a debt of 1,500,000 rix-dollars, due to Prussia by that potentate (1).

There was in truth no present interest at variance between these powers, and the treaty contained little more of importance than a recognition of the Republic by Frederick-William; but there never was a more ultimately ruinous step taken by a nation. The conquest of Holland, which overturned the balance of power, and exposed Prussia uncovered to the attacks of France, should have been the signal for a sincere coalition, such as that which had coerced the ambition of Louis XIV, and subsequently overturned the power of Napoléon. What a succession of disasters would such a decided conduct in all probability have prevented; what long and disastrous wars; what a prodigious effusion of human blood; what unheard-of efforts did it require for Prussia to regain in 1813 the position which she occupied in 1795. But these events were buried in the womb of Fate; no one then anticipated the coming disasters; and the Prussian ministers deemed themselves fortunate in escaping from a war, in which the real interest of the monarchy seemed to be at stake. They concluded peace accordingly; they left Austria to contend single-handed with the power of France (2); and the battle of Jena, and Treaty of Tilsit, were the consequence (3).

The disunited and unwieldy mass of the empire, without altogether discontinuing military operations, pursued them in so languid a manner as to be equivalent to a complete pacification. Bavaria, the Elector of Mayence, and several other powers, issued a declaration, that the States of the Empire had not taken up arms but for the protection of the states adjoining Alsace, and that they had no inclination to interfere in the internal affairs of France. Spain, exhausted and dejected, awaited only the most favourable opportunity of making a separate peace, and concluding a contest from which she had already suffered so much; while Piedmont, crushed by the weight of armaments beyond its strength, which cost more than three times the subsidies granted by England, equally desired a con-

(1) Hard. iii. 144—146.

(2) Jom. vii. 6. Th. vii. 202.

(3) The British historian need not hesitate to express this opinion, since it is not only agreeable to that of all the German annalists, but expressly admitted by the able and candid Prussian statesman, who concluded with Barthélemy, on the part of the Directory, that unhappy pacification. "The King of Prussia," says prince Hardenberg, "tired of warlike operations, rudely awakened from his dreams on the plains of Champagne, and deeming a counter revolution in France impossible, said to his ministers: 'Arrange matters as you like, provided you extricate me from the war with France.' By signing the treaty of Bâle, he abandoned the House of Orange, sacrificed Holland, laid open the empire to French invasion, and prepared the ruin of the ancient Germanic constitution. Despising the lessons of history, that Prince forgot that no sooner was the independence of Holland menaced, in the end of the seventeenth century, than a league of all the sovereigns of Europe was formed to restrain the ambition of Louis XIV; while at this time, the invasion of the same country, effected under the Republican banners, led to a dissolution of the coalition of Kings against the French Revolution. From that

moment every throne was stript of the magic halo which heretofore had surrounded it. Accident merely prevented the treaty of Bâle from being followed by a general Revolution in Europe.

"Had Frederick-William been animated with the spirit of Frederick the Great, he would have negotiated with the olive branch in one hand, and the sword in the other, and supporting Holland, he would even have included it in the line of his military protection. By so doing, he would have risen to the rank not only of the mediator, but the arbiter of Europe, and been enabled to aspire to the glorious mission of balancing the dominion of the seas, against continental despotism. Whereas, the peace of Bâle, concluded on narrow views, and without any regard to the common cause, destroyed the personal character of Frederick-William, and stript the Prussian monarchy of its glorious reputation. We may add, that if, ten years afterwards, Prussia was precipitated into the abyss, it is to be imputed to its blind and obstinate adherence to the system of neutrality, which commenced with the treaty of Bâle. No one felt this more deeply, or expressed it more loudly, than the Prussian diplomatist who concluded that pacification."—Prince Hardenberg's Memoirs, iii. 150, 151.

Treaty between Holland and France.

clusion to hostilities without venturing to express the wish. The conquest of Holland relieved the French government of all anxiety in that quarter, by compelling the Dutch to conclude an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Republic. The principal conditions of that treaty were, that the United-Provinces ceded Venloo and Maestricht to Belgium; and bound themselves to aid the French with twelve ships of the line, and eighteen frigates, and one-half of the troops which they had under arms (1).

Fresh Treaty between Austria and England.

Thus the whole weight of the war fell on Austria and England. The former of these powers had suffered too much by the loss of the Low-Countries to permit her to think of peace, while the disasters she had experienced had not as yet been so great as to compel her to renounce the hope of regaining them.

4th and 20th May 1795.

Mr. Pitt, however, was indefatigable in his efforts to revive the confederacy: and he met with a worthy ally in Thugut, who directed the Cabinet of Vienna. On the 4th May 1795, a treaty, offensive and defensive, was concluded between the two powers, by which Austria engaged to maintain 200,000 men in the field during the approaching campaign, and England to furnish a subsidy of L.6,000,000 sterling. The utmost efforts were at the same time made to reinforce the Imperial armies on the Rhine (2).

Efforts of England to maintain the War.

England made exertions for the prosecution of the war, more considerable than she had yet put forth, and seemed sensible that the national strength required to be more fully exerted now that the war approached her own shores. Her naval force was augmented to 100,000 seamen, and one hundred and eight ships of the line put in commission, and the land forces raised to 150,000 men. The expenditure of the year, exclusive of the interest of the national debt, amounted to L.27,500,000, of which L.18,000,000 was raised by loan, and L.3,500,000 by exchequer bills.

Land and Sea Forces, and Supplies.

To such an immense extent, thus early in the contest, was the ruinous system of providing for the expenses of the year by borrowing, adopted by the British government. New taxes to the amount of L.1,600,000 were imposed, and notwithstanding the most vehement debates on the conduct of Administration, and the original expedience of the war, all parties in Parliament concurred in the necessity, now that we were embarked in the contest, of prosecuting it with vigour (3).

Treaty with Russia.

On the 18th February, an alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded between Great-Britain, Austria, and Russia. This important event, the first step towards the great and decisive share which that power ultimately took in the contest, was not, however, at first productive of any results. The Empress Catherine, whose attention was wholly engrossed in securing the immense territories which had fallen to her by the partition of Poland, merely sent a fleet of twelve ships of the line, and eight frigates, to reinforce Admiral Duncan, who was cruising in the North Seas, to blockade the squadron recently acquired by France from the Dutch Republic; but neither had any opportunity to measure their strength with the enemy (4).

Arguments in England against War.

A powerful and energetic party in England still declaimed against the war as unjust and unnecessary, and viewed with secret complacency the triumphs of the Republican forces. It was urged in Par-

(1) Jom. vii. 8, 16, 18. Th. vii. 203.

(2) Jom. vii. 15, 16. Parl. Hist. xxxii, 576.

(3) New Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 31, 33, 45, 49.

(4) Jom. vii. 11, 17.

liament, that the revolutionary government in France being now overturned, and one professing moderation installed in its stead, the great object of the war was in fact at an end : that the continued disasters of the Allies proved the impossibility of forcing a government on France contrary to the inclination of its inhabitants : that the Confederacy was now in fact dissolved, and the first opportunity should therefore be seized to conclude a contest from which no rational hopes of success any longer remained : that if we continued fighting till the Bourbons were restored, it was impossible to see any end to the contest, or to the burden which would be imposed upon England during its continuance : that nothing but disaster had hitherto been experienced in the struggle; and if that was the case formerly, when all Europe was arrayed against the Republic, what might be now expected when England and Austria alone were left to continue the struggle (1), and the French power extended from the Pyrenees to the Texel? that every consideration of safety and expedience, therefore, recommended the speedy close of a contest, of doubtful policy in its commencement, and more than doubtful justice in its principles.

Mr. Pitt's  
Reply. Mr. Pitt replied, that the object of the war was not to force the people of France to adopt any particular form of government, but merely to secure their neighbours from their aggression; and that, although he much feared that no security could be found for this, till a monarchy was restored in that country, yet that it was no part of the Allied policy to compel its adoption : that the government of the French Republic was changed in form only, and not in spirit, and was as formidable as when the war was first provoked by the declamations of the Girondists : that hostilities would again be commenced as soon as the military power of their enemies was dissolved, and that the Allies would then find it as difficult a matter to reassemble their forces, as the French would now find it to dissolve theirs : that it was highly improbable that the Republican government would be able to induce men accustomed to war and rapine, to return to the peaceful occupations of life; and much more likely that they would find it necessary to employ them in schemes of ambition and plunder, to prevent them from turning their arms against domestic authority : that war, however costly, at least gave to England security, and it would be highly impolitic to exchange this for the peril necessarily consequent upon a resumption of amicable relations with a country in such a state of political contagion : that peace would at once prove destructive to the French West India islands, by delivering them over to anarchy and Jacobinism, and from them the flame of servile revolt would speedily spread to our own colonial possessions in that quarter : that, notwithstanding the great successes of the French on the continent, the balance of conquest in the contest with England, was decidedly in favour of this country : that the losses of the Republicans in wealth and resources had been greater since the beginning of the war than those of all the Allies put together : that the forced requisitions and assignats of the French, which had hitherto maintained the contest, could not be continued without the severities of the Reign of Terror; and that now was the time, by vigorously continuing the contest, to compel the Directory to augment their redundant paper currency; and thus accelerate the ruin which it was evident such a

(1) Mr. Fox and Willberforce's Speech. New Ann. Reg. 1795, 13, 14. Parl. Debates, xxxii. 231, 242.

system must sooner or later bring on the financial resources of the country (1).

Great increase in the Patriotic Spirit of the People.

The internal feeling of England, notwithstanding the continued ill success of its arms, was daily becoming more unanimous in favour of the war. The atrocities of the Jacobins had moderated the ardour of many of the most enlightened of their early friends, and confirmed the hostility of almost all the opulent and influential classes; the spectacle of the numerous and interesting emigrant families who had been reduced from the height of prosperity to utter destitution awakened the compassion of the humane over the whole country; while the immense successes of the Republicans, and, above all, the occupation of Holland, excited the hereditary and ill-extinguished jealousy of the English people of their ancient rivals. Although, therefore, the division of parties continued most vehement, and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act still invested the government with extraordinary powers, yet the feeling of the country was gradually becoming more united (2), and its passions, like those of a combatant who has been wounded in the strife, were waxing warmer with all the blood which it had lost.

Exhausted state of France.

In France, on the other hand, the exhaustion consequent upon a state of extraordinary and unparalleled exertion was rapidly beginning to display itself. The system of the Convention had consisted in spending the capital of the country by means of confiscations, forced loans, and military requisitions; and the issue of assignats, supported by the Reign of Terror, had, beyond all former example, carried their design into effect. But all such violent means of obtaining supplies, can, in their own nature, only be temporary,—how great soever may be the accumulated wealth of a state, it must in time be exhausted, if not supplied by the continued rills of private industry. The Reign of Terror, by stopping all the efforts of individuals to better their condition, and paralysing the arms of labour over the whole country, dried up the sources of national wealth; even had the fall of Robespierre not put a period to the violent means adopted for rendering it available to the state, the same result must soon have followed from the cessation of all the sources of its supply (3).

Naval operations in the Mediterranean. Combat of La Spezia.

During the winter of 1794, the French government made the greatest exertions to put their navy on a respectable footing, but all their efforts on that element led to nothing but disaster. Early in March the Toulon fleet, consisting of thirteen ships of the line, put to sea with the design of expelling the English squadron from the Gulf of Genoa, and landing an expedition in Corsica. Being ignorant of their intention, Lord Hotham, who commanded the English blockading fleet, was at Leghorn at the time, and they succeeded in capturing the *Berwick*, of seventy-four guns, in the Gulf of St.-Florent, which found itself surrounded by the French fleet before its crew were aware it had put to sea. But the British Admiral was not long in taking his revenge. On the 7th March he set sail from Leghorn with thirteen line-of-battle ships, and on 13th fell in with the French squadron of the same force. By a skilful manœuvre he succeeded in cutting off two ships of the line, the *Ca Ira* and the *Censeur*, which fell into the hands of the British; and the remainder of the fleet, after

(1) New Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 16, 17. Parl. Debates, xxxii. 242, 251.

(2) Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 24, 42.

(3) Mig. ii. 402. Th. vii. 433, Jom. vii. 54.



a severe but partial action, was compelled to fall back to the Isles de Hyères, and disembark the land troops which they had on board. By this vigorous stroke the object of the expedition in the recovery of Corsica was entirely frustrated; and such was the dismay with which the soldiers were inspired from their sufferings during its continuance, that out of eighteen thousand men who were originally embarked, only ten thousand reached the French army, then lying in the Marquisate of Oneille (1).

War in the Maritime Alps. Meanwhile the courts of Vienna and of Turin were making the most vigorous efforts for the prosecution of the war on the Piedmontese frontier. The Austrians reinforced the King of Sardinia with fifteen thousand men, and the Piedmontese troops raised the effective force in the field to fifty thousand men. The French troops on the same frontier were in a still greater state of destitution and misery than the Army of the Rhine. From the effect of desertion and sickness, during the severe winter of 1794, amidst the inhospitable regions of the Alps, the total effective forces on that frontier did not exceed forty-five thousand. They occupied the whole crest of the mountains, from Vado to the Little St.-Bernard, while eighteen thousand of the Allied Forces were stationed in front of Cairo, fifteen thousand near Ceva, ten thousand in the valleys of Stura and Suza, and six thousand on the lofty ridges which close the upper extremity of the valley of Aosta. Generally speaking, the Republicans were perched on the summits of the mountains, while the Piedmontese forces occupied the narrow defiles where they sunk down into the Italian plains (2).

The campaign commenced by a well-concerted enterprise of the French on the Col-Dumon, near Mont-Cenis, which the Piedmontese occupied with a force of two thousand men, from whence they were driven with considerable loss. But shortly afterwards, Kellermann having been obliged to weaken his right by large detachments, to suppress a revolt at Toulon, the Imperialists resolved to take the lead by offensive operations against the French forces stationed in the Maritime Alps. For this purpose a simulta-

June 20. neous attack was made on the Republican posts at St.-Giacomo, Bardinetto, and Vado, which were all fortified. Though the French gained an advantage at the Col-de-Tende, their line was forced back after several days' fighting. The Republicans were obliged to evacuate all their positions in the Maritime Alps. The Allied Forces occupied Loano, Finale, and Voltri, with all the magazines and artillery which had been col-

June 26. lected there, and threatened the country of Nice, and the territory of the Republic. Had the Allied Generals pushed their advantages with vigour, the whole right wing of the French army might have been driven from the mountains, or destroyed; for they could have collected thirty thousand fresh troops, flushed with victory, to crush twenty thousand, harassed with fatigue, destitute of shoes, and literally starving. Kellermann, with the aid of his chief of the staff, Berthier, exerted the utmost degree of skill and ability to compensate the inferiority of their force; but it was with the greatest difficulty, and only by pledging their private credit for the supplies of the army, that they were enabled either to procure provisions for the troops, or inspire them with the resolution to defend the rugged and desolate ridge, in which the contest was carried on. Their situation was rendered the more desperate, by an unsuccessful naval action between the Bri-

Difficult situation of the French

(1) Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 138. Jom. vii. 72, 71.

(2) Toul. v. 293. Jom. vii. 76, 78, 80.

tish and Toulon fleets in the bay of Fréjus, in the course of which the Alcide, of seventy-four guns, blew up; and the French squadron, severely shattered, was compelled to take refuge in the harbour of Toulon. Fortunately for the Republicans, divisions between the Allied Generals at this time paralysed their movements, and prevented them from following up those advantages which their recent successes and the open communication with the English fleet seemed to afford (1).

These disasters on the frontiers of Provence induced the government to detach seven thousand men from the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, and ten thousand men from the army of the Rhine, to reinforce the combatants on the Alps. Their arrival, towards the end of August, restored the superiority to the Republican side, while no corresponding addition was made to the forces of the Allied Generals,—another proof, among the many which these campaigns afforded, of the total want of concert which prevailed between the Allies on the vast circle of operations from the Rhine to the Mediterranean, and the inestimable advantages which the French derived from the unity of government, and interior line of communication which they enjoyed. The consequences soon proved ruinous to the Allied Armies (2).

Resume the offensive. Kellermann, at liberty by this powerful reinforcement to resume the offensive, and encouraged by the evident discord between the Allied Generals, formed the design of separating the Sardinian from the Austrian forces by a concentrated attack upon the centre of their line, and compelling the latter to give battle alone in the valley of Loano. But before this plan could be carried into effect, the peace with Spain enabled the government to detach to the support of the army of Italy the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, which arrived in the Maritime Alps before the end of September, and the command of the whole given to General Scherer, Kellermann being detached to the command of the forces in Savoy. This great addition rendered the Republicans nearly double of the Allied Forces in that quarter; while the Courts of Turin and Vienna took no steps to avert the storm preparing to burst upon their heads. In truth; the Piedmontese government, experiencing the fate of all weak states in alliance with powerful ones, began to be as jealous of its friends as its enemies; while the Imperial Generals rendered it too evident, by their manner and conduct, that they had no confidence either in the sincerity of the government, or the efficiency of their soldiers. Devins trusted for his support not to the strength of the mountains which he occupied, but the co-operation of the English fleet in the bay of Genoa; a signal error, which soon led to the most disastrous consequences (3).

Battle of Loano. The Austrian army, consisting of forty thousand men, was posted in a strong and fortified position, having its left resting on the little seaport town of Loano, and its right extending to the summit of the impending heights to the northward, from whence it communicated by a chain of fortified posts with the strong places of Ceva, Mondovi, and Coni, held by the Piedmontese troops. Their position was strong, but it was balanced by the circumstance, that in case of disaster the left wing had no means of retreat. The Republicans occupied a position in front of their oppo-

(1) Jom. vii. 98, 101. Toul. v. 293, 297, 300.

(2) Jom. vii. 280.

(3) Jom. vii. 284, 293, 297. Toul. v. 301.

nents, their right resting on the little village of Borghetto on the sea-coast, their left extending to the Col-de-Tende and the summits of the Maritime Alps. The army at first consisted only of thirty-seven thousand men, but it was raised by the successive arrival of the columns from the Eastern Pyrenees, before the middle of November, to sixty thousand men. Masséna, who had acquired a remarkable knowledge of the localities of that rugged district during the preceding campaigns, and whose great military abilities had already become conspicuous, was intrusted with the command of the attack. Notwithstanding the vast accession of force which the Republicans had received, and the increased activity which they had for some time evinced, the Austrian commander was so little aware of his danger that he lay at La Pietra, detained by an abscess in his mouth, while his officers were chiefly assembled at Feriole, when they were roused from a ball by the sound of the French cannon, at six o'clock on the morning of the 23d November (1).

Scherer, the General-in-Chief, commanded the right wing, Augereau the centre, and Serrurier the left. Masséna's design was to force the Austrian centre with an overwhelming force, and from that vantage-ground to take the remainder of the line in flank and rear. After haranguing his troops, he led them to the assault. The Austrian centre, commanded by Argenteau, made Nov. 23, 1795. an obstinate resistance at the posts of Bardinetto and Melogno; but such was the vehemence of the fresh columns which the Republicans brought up to the assault, that they were compelled at length to retire to a second line on the right bank of the Bormida. Masséna soon forced that position also, and by so doing, got into the interior of the Austrian line, and was able to take all their positions in rear. The result of this first day's combat was, that the centre of the Allies being forced, their left wing was liable to be overwhelmed by the combined attacks of the French centre and right wing (2).

Nov. 24. No sooner was the Austrian General made sensible of this disaster, than he took the most precipitate steps to draw back his right wing. But he was not permitted to do this without sustaining the greatest losses. By break of day Augereau was climbing the heights of the Apennines, while his victorious battalions were driving every thing before them on their sides. In conducting their retreat, the Imperialists did not display the vigour or decision which could alone save them in such perilous circumstances, and which, on the preceding day, had extricated the division commanded by Roccavina from equal danger. The consequence was, that they were beset on all sides in a ravine, which formed their only line of retreat; the head of the column, seized with a panic, was driven back upon the centre, and thrown into utter confusion; and in the midst of an unparalleled scene of carnage and horror, forty-eight pieces of cannon, and one hundred caissons, were abandoned. The other column of the right wing only escaped by betaking themselves to almost inaccessible paths, and abandoning all their artillery, and at length, with great difficulty, effected their retreat by the road of the Corniché. Five thousand prisoners, eighty pieces of cannon, and an immense quantity of ammunition and magazines, fell into the hands of the victors (3); the total loss on the side of the Austrians was not less than seven thousand, while that of the French hardly amounted to one thousand men.

This great victory, which terminated the campaign of 1795 in the Alps, was

(1) Jom. vii. 298, 309. Toul. v. 378, 379.

(2) Toul. v. 379, 381. Jom. vii. 310—315.

(3) Jom. vii. 316—321. Toul. v. 380—383.

**Its decisive consequences.** of decisive importance to the Republic. It gave the French winter-quarters at Loano, Savona, Vado, and other places on the Italian side of the Apennines, and by rendering them masters of the valleys of the Orba, the Bormida, and the Tanaro, afforded every facility, at the commencement of the following campaign, for achieving the great object of separating the Austrian from the Piedmontese troops. In Savoy, the early fall of the snows precluded active operations at that rigorous season; but the French continued to occupy their elevated position on the summits of the ridge of Mont-Genèvre, Mont-Cenis, and Little St.-Bernard (1).

**Tactics by which it was gained by the Republicans.** This battle, the most decisive yet gained from the commencement of the war by the Republican forces, is well deserving of consideration. It was the first instance of the successful application by the French troops of those principles of strategy which were afterwards carried to such perfection by Napoléon. It is the first victory in which a decisive advantage was gained, where the strength of the adverse army was at once broken by the number of prisoners and artillery which were taken. The same principles which the English adopted under Rodney and Howe, that of breaking the line, and falling with an overwhelming force upon one wing, was here carried into execution with decisive effect. It is worthy of observation, that this system was thus practically accomplished, and fully understood, by Masséna, before Napoléon ever had the command of an army; another proof among the many which exist, that even the greatest genius cannot by more than a few years anticipate the lights of the age. Such a plan is the natural result of conscious prowess, and an experienced superiority in combat, which leads the attacking force to throw itself, without hesitation, into the midst of the enemy's columns. It will never be adopted but by the party by whom such a superiority is felt; it will never be successful, but where such a superiority exists.

**War in Spain. Indecisive operations in Catalonia.** The war on the Spanish frontier, during this campaign, was speedily brought to a successful termination. In the Western Pyrenees, the Republicans, during the winter, had sustained the greatest losses from sickness; no less than twelve thousand men perished in the hospitals since the troops went into their cantonments, and twenty-five thousand were still sick; only twenty-five thousand, out of a nominal force of sixty thousand, were in a condition to take the field, and they having long been reduced to half a ration a-day, looked more like spectres than men. It was not till the beginning of June that the Republican forces were so much strengthened, by reinforcements from the interior, as to be able to take the field. The fall of Figueras and Roses gave the French a secure base for their operations in Catalonia, but the operations there, though upon the whole successful, were not of any decisive importance. The Spanish army in that quarter was stationed on the river la Fluvia. Several combats of inconsiderable importance took place, the most remarkable of which was that of Bezalu, where Augereau, with a small force, defeated all the efforts of the Spanish army. The opposing armies were still on the Fluvia, when the treaty of peace between the two powers suspended all farther hostilities (2).

**Great successes of the Republicans in Biscay.** It was in Biscay that the decisive action took place which hastened this important event. Twelve thousand men detached from the army of la Vendée, and replaced in that quarter by the troops who

(1) Jom. vii. 324.

(2) Jom. vii. 104, 110, 116. Toul. v. 318, 221.

had been engaged in the reduction of Luxembourg, at length put the French commander in a condition to take the field. Towards the end of June, the campaign commenced by an unsuccessful attempt of the French upon the

June 25. corps commanded by Felangieri; but in the beginning of July, Moncey forced the passage of the river Deva, and by a vigorous attack with his centre, succeeded in dividing the Spanish army into two parts, and in-

July 17. terposing a hostile force between them. General Crespo, who commanded the Spanish left, was so vigorously pursued by the Republicans, that he was compelled to abandon both Bilboa and Vittoria, and found himself driven to the frontiers of Old Castile, with a force reduced by the sword and desertion to seven thousand men. The left wing of the invading army was not so successful; and preparations were making for the investment of Pam-peluna, when hostilities were terminated by the intelligence of the treaty of Bâle, concluded on the 12th July between the hostile powers (1).

Peace be-  
tween  
France and  
Spain. By this treaty Spain recognised the French Republic, and ceded to France the Spanish half of the island of St.-Domingo; an acquisition more embarrassing than valuable, in the state of anarchy to which the precipitate measures for the emancipation of the negroes had reduced that July 12, 1795. once flourishing colony. In return, the Republic relinquished all its conquests in Europe, and the frontiers of the two states were fixed as before the commencement of hostilities. The principal advantage gained to France by this treaty, and it proved in the end a most important one, was the command which it gave the government of two experienced and courageous armies, who were forthwith transferred to the seat of war in the Alps, and laid the foundation of the great achievements which in the following campaign signalized the progress of the army of Italy.

Pacification  
of la Ven-  
dée. During the whole winter of 1794, the unconquerable Charette, maintained, with a few thousand men, the contest in la Vendée. The increase of the Republican forces, the diminution of his own followers, seemed only to augment the resources of his courage. So highly was his perseverance prized, that Suwarrow wrote with his own hand a letter expressive of his admiration; and all the Princes of Europe looked to him as the only man capable of restoring the royal cause. But after the fall of Robespierre, and the execution of Carrier, more moderate ideas began to prevail in the French government; and the Committee of Public Safety became weary of a contest apparently interminable, and which consumed in self-destruction a large portion of the forces of the Republic. At the suggestion of Carnot, they published a proclamation, couched in terms of reconciliation and amity; Jan. 18, 1795. and this having led to an address in similar terms from the Royalist chiefs, conferences took place between the contending parties, and a treaty was concluded at La Jaunais for the final pacification of the West of France (2).

Treaty with  
the insur-  
gents. The principal conditions of this treaty were the free and undis-  
turbed exercise of their religion to the inhabitants of the insurgent district; the establishment of a corps of two thousand territorial guards, composed of the natives of the country, and paid by government; the immediate payment of two millions of francs for the expenses of the war; various indemnities to the greatest sufferers from its ravages; the removal of the sequestration laid on the emigrants, and all condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal; the tacit permission to the people to retain their arms, and an exemption

(1) Toul. v. 220. Jom. vii. 118, 122, 125.

(2) Lac. xii. 298. Jom. vii. 26.

from every kind of tax, levy, or requisition. On their side the Royalists engaged to submit to the laws of the Republic, and, as soon as possible, surrender their artillery. There were also secret articles, the exact nature of which has never been ascertained; but Charette and the Royalist party have always maintained, that they contained an engagement on the part of the Convention, as soon as the state of the public feeling would admit of it, to restore the monarchy. This treaty, though not at the time embraced by Stofflet and the Chouans, was shortly after acceded to by both the one and the other (1).

April 20,  
1795.

Nine days after the signature of this treaty, Charette and his officers made a triumphal entry into Nantes, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants. Discharges of artillery announced the passage of the Loire, the scene of so many Republican murders, by the Royalist hero, who was mounted on a splendid charger, dressed in blue, with the Royalist scarf, and a plume of white feathers on his head. Four of his lieutenants rode by his side, arrayed in the same manner, which formed a painful contrast with the dress of the commissioners of the Convention, distinguished chiefly by the red cap of liberty (2).

But after the first tumults of public joy had subsided, it became evident that the treaty was a truce rather than a final pacification, and that the seeds of inextinguishable discord subsisted between the opposite parties. The Royalists and the Republicans lived exclusively with each other: The officers of Charette appeared at the theatre with the white cockade; though he himself, who had so often rivalled Coligny in war, surpassed him in prudence and caution during peace. Carefully avoiding every menacing or hostile expression, he was yet reserved and circumspect in his demeanour; and it was evident to all, that though anxious to avoid an immediate rupture, he had no confidence in the continuance of the accommodation. The members of the Committee of Public Safety were impressed with the same conviction. The answer they made to their friends, when pressed on the subject of the treaty, was,—“We have little reliance on the submission of Charette; but we are always gaining time, and preparing the means of crushing him on the first symptoms of a revolt (3).”

In truth, the Republican pride had too good reason to be mortified at this treaty. Conquerors of all their other enemies, they were yet seemingly humbled by their own subjects; and the peasants of la Vendée had extorted terms which the Kings of Europe had in vain contended for. It is painful to think that the renewal of hostilities in this district, and its tragic termination, was owing to the delusive hopes held out by, and ill-judged assistance of Great-Britain.

Expedition  
to Quiberon.

Induced by the flattering accounts of the emigrants, the British government had long been making great preparations for a descent on the western coast of France, by a corps of those expatriated nobles, whose fortunes had been rendered all but desperate by the Revolution. Its success appeared to them so certain, that all the terrors of the laws against the emigrants could not prevent a large force from being recruited among the emigrants in England and Germany, and the prisoners of war in the British prisons. They judged, perhaps wisely, that as the expected movement was to be

(1) Jom. vii. 26, 27, 29. Lac. xii. 302.  
(2) Lac. xii. 303. Beauch. iii. 142, 143.

(3) Lac. xii. 304. Beauch. iii. 241. 248.

wholly national, it would be inexpedient to give the command of the expedition to a British commander, or support it by any considerable body of English troops. The forces embarked consisted of six thousand emigrants in the pay of England, a regiment of artillerymen from Toulon, and they carried with them eighty pieces of cannon, with all their equipages and arms, and clothing for eighty thousand men. They were divided into two divisions; the first commanded by Puisaye, whose representations had been the origin of the plan; and the second by the Count de Sombreuil. A third division of English troops was destined to support the two first, when they had made good their landing on the French coast. The command of the whole was given to the Count d'Artois, and great hopes were entertained of its success, not so much from the numerical amount of the forces on board, as the illustrious names which the nobles bore, and the expected co-operation of the Chouans and Vendéens, who had engaged, on the first appearance of a prince of the blood, to place eighty thousand men at his disposal (1).

Running  
Sea-Fight at  
Belleisle. The naval affairs of the French, on the western coast, had been so unfortunate as to promise every facility to the invading force. In winter, the Brest fleet, in obedience to the positive orders of government, put to sea; but its raw and inexperienced crews were totally unable to face the tempests, which kept even the hardy veterans of England in their harbours. The squadron was dispersed by a storm, five ships of the line were lost, and the remainder so much damaged, that twelve line-of-battle ships were alone able in June to put to sea. This fleet, accompanied by thirteen frigates, surprised the advanced-guard of the Channel fleet, under the command of Admiral Cornwallis, near Belleisle, on the 7th June; but such was the skill and intrepidity of the British Admiral, that he succeeded in maintaining a running fight the whole day, and at length extricated his little squadron without any loss, from the fearful odds by which they were assailed. Six days afterwards, Lord Bridport, with fourteen ships of the line, and eight frigates, hove in sight, and, after two day's manœuvring, succeeded in compelling the enemy to engage. The British Admiral bore down in two columns on the hostile fleet, who, instead of awaiting the contest, immediately fell into confusion, and strained every nerve to escape. In the running fight three ships of the line were captured by the English, and, if the wind had permitted all their squadron to take part in the action, there can be no doubt that the whole French fleet would have been taken or destroyed. As it was, they were so discomfited, that they crowded all sail till they reached the harbour of Lorient, and made no attempt during the remainder of the season to dispute with the British the empire of the seas (2).

Landing of  
the Emi-  
grants in  
Quiberon  
Bay. This brilliant engagement having removed all obstacles to the expedition, the three divisions of the emigrants set sail, and, on the 27th appeared in Quiberon Bay. They immediately landed, to the amount in all of about ten thousand men, and made themselves masters of the Fort of Penhièvre, which defends the entrance of the Peninsula of the same name, and, encouraged by the success, disembarked all the immense stores and train of artillery, which were intended to organize the whole Royalist forces of the West of France. But dissensions immediately afterwards broke out between Puisaye and d'Hervilly, neither of whom was

(1) Jom. vii. 135, 143. Beauch. iii. 419, 421. Th. vii. 454.

(2) Jom. vii. 147. Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 438. Beauch. iii. 431, 432. Th. vii. 457.

clearly invested with the supreme direction, the former having the command of the emigrants, the latter of the British forces. At the same time, a small force detached into the interior, having experienced a check, the troops were withdrawn into the peninsula and forts. The Chouans, indeed, flocked in great numbers to the spot, and ten thousand of these brave irregulars were armed and clothed from the British fleet; but it was soon discovered that their desultory mode of fighting was altogether unsuited for co-operation with regular forces; and, on the first occasion on which they encountered the Republicans, they dispersed, leaving the emigrants exposed to the whole shock of the enemy. This check was decisive of the fate of the expedition; the troops were all crowded into the peninsula, and lines hastily constructed to defend its entrance; and it was determined to remain on the defensive; a ruinous policy for an invading force, and which can hardly fail of exposing it to destruction (1).

Meanwhile, an inconceivable degree of agitation prevailed in the Morbihan, and all along the western coast of France. The appearance of a few vessels in the Bay of Quiberon before the fleet arrived, filled the peasantry with the most tumultuous joy; without the aid of couriers or telegraphs, the intelligence spread in a few hours through the whole province; and 500,000 individuals, men, women, and children, spent the night round their cottages, too anxious to sleep, and listening to every breeze for farther information. One of their chiefs, d'Allegre, embarked on board a fishing vessel, and reached Lord Cornwallis's vessel, from whom he received a liberal supply of powder, which was openly disembarked on the coast. Instantly the whole population were at work; every hand was turned towards the manufacture of the implements of war. The lead was stript from the roofs of the houses and churches, and rapidly converted into balls; the women and children made cartridges (2); not a hand was idle; universal joy prevailed; the moment of deliverance appeared to be at hand.

**Vigorous Measures of Hoche.** The intelligence of the disembarkation of the Royalist forces excited the utmost sensation through all France, and demonstrated what might have been the results if a powerful army, capable of arresting the Republicans in the field, had been thrown into the western provinces, while its numerous bands were organized in an effective manner. Hoche immediately took the most vigorous measures to face the danger; his forces were so disposed as to overawe Brittany, and stifle the symptoms of insurrection which manifested themselves in that extensive district, while he himself, having collected seven thousand men, proceeded 7th July. to the attack of the Peninsula of Quiberon. On the 7th July, he advanced in close columns to the lines, and, after a smart action, drove the Royalists back in confusion to the intrenched camp which they had formed near Fort Penthièvre. This disaster led to an open rupture between the emigrants and Chouan chiefs; mutually exasperated, they accused each other of the bad success of the operations, and many thousands of the latter disbanded, and sought to escape from the peninsula (3).

While vigour and resolution thus characterized all the operations of the Republicans, disunion and misunderstanding paralysed the immense force which, under able and united management, might have been placed at the

(1) Jom. vii. 153, 154. Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 71. Beauch. iii. 453—455, 470. Th. vii. 460.

(2) Beauch. iii. 432, 424.

(3) Th. vii. 466, 473 Jom. vii. 154, Beauch. iii. 445, 446, 547.



disposal of the Royalists. The Royalist Committee at Paris, either ignorant of, or determined to counteract the designs of Puisaye on the coast, sent instructions to Charette and the Vendéens in Lower-Poitou, to attempt no movement till the fleet appeared on his own shores; he, in consequence, renewed his treaty with the Convention, at the very time when the expedition was appearing off Quiberon Bay; and refused to accept the arms, ammunition, and money, which Lord Cornwallis tendered to enable him to act with effect. At the very time when every thing depended upon unity of action, and a vigorous demonstration of strength in the outset, the Royalists of Poitou, Anjou, Upper-Brittany, and Maine, were kept in a state of inactivity by the Royalist Committee, while the emigrants and the peasants of the Morbihan, not a tenth part of the real force of the insurgents, sustained the whole weight of the Republican power (1).

Their desperate situation. The misery of the troops, cooped up in the camp, soon became extreme. Eighteen thousand men found themselves shut up in a corner of land, without tents or lodgings of any sort to protect them from the weather, and the want of provisions soon rendered it absolutely necessary to discover some means of enlarging the sphere of their operations. In this extremity, Puisaye, whose courage rose with the difficulties with which he was surrounded, resolved to make an effort to raise the blockade. He was the more encouraged to make this attempt from the arrival of the third division

25th July. of the expedition, under the Count de Sombreuil, with the best regiments of the Royalists; and bearing with him the commission to himself as commander-in-chief of the whole Allied Forces. For this purpose, four thousand Chouans, under the command of Tinteniach, were sent by sea to the point of St.-James, to attack the Republican intrenchments in rear, while Count Vauban, with three thousand, was despatched to Carnac, to combine with him in the same object, and Puisaye, at the head of the main body, assailed them in front (1).

Unhappy attempts at succour by the Chouan Chiefs. Notwithstanding the extensive line, embracing twenty leagues, over which this attack on the Republican intrenchments was combined, it might have been attended with success, had not Tinteniach, misled by orders received from the Royal Committee at Paris, been induced, after landing, to move to Elvin, where he indeed destroyed a Republican detachment, but was prevented from taking any part in the decisive action which ensued in the Peninsula; while Vauban, repulsed at Carnac, was compelled to re-embark his troops, and came back only in time to witness the rout of the main body of the Royalists. Meanwhile, Puisaye, ignorant of these disasters, marched out of his camp, at daybreak on the 16th, at the head of four thousand five hundred gallant men, and advanced towards the

July 16. enemy. The Republicans fell back at his approach to their intrenchments; and a distant discharge of musketry made the Royalists believe that Tinteniach and Vauban had already begun the attack in the rear, and that the decisive moment was come. Full of joy and hope, Puisaye gave the signal for the assault, and the emigrant battalions advanced with the utmost intrepidity to the foot of the redoubts; but scarcely had they reached them when several masked batteries opened a terrible fire of grape, a shower of musketry from above mowed down their ranks, while the strength of the works in front rendered any farther advance impossible. The expected attack in the rear

(1) Beauch. iii. 459—462.

(2) Jom. vii. 157—160. Beauch. iii. 478—481.

never appeared, the Royalists were exposed alone to the devastating fire of the intrenchments, and after sustaining it for some time with firmness, Puisaye, seeing that the expected diversion had not taken place, gave the signal for a retreat. It was soon converted into a rout by the Republican cavalry, which issued with fury out of their lines, and threw the retiring columns into disorder (1): d'Hervilly was killed, and the assailants driven back with such vehemence to the fort, that, but for the fire of the English cruisers, they would have entered it pell-mell with the fugitives.

They are  
repulsed.

This bloody repulse was a mortal stroke to the Royalists. Tintinniac, returning from his unfortunate digression to Elvin, towards the scene of action, on the following day, was encountered and killed, after the dispersion of his forces, by a light column of the Republicans. On the

July 17.

same day Sombreuil disembarked his forces, but they arrived in the fort only in time to share in the massacre which was approaching. Hoche, resolved not to let the Royalists recover from their consternation, determined to storm the fort by escalade, without going through a regular siege. On the

July 20.

Storming  
of the  
Royalists'  
Intrench-  
ments.

night of the 20th July the Republicans advanced in silence along the shore, while the roar of the waves, occasioned by a violent wind, prevented the sound of their footsteps from being heard in the fort. A division, under Menaye, threw themselves into the sea, in order to get round the rocks on which the redoubts were erected, while Hoche himself advanced with the main body to escalade the ramparts in front. Menaye advanced in silence with the water up to the shoulders of his grenadiers, and though many were swallowed up by the waves, a sufficient number got through the perilous pass to ascend and mount the rocky ascent of the fort on the side next the sea. Meanwhile the garrison, confident in their numbers, were reposing in fancied security, when the sentinels on the walls discovered a long moving shadow at the foot of the works. The alarm was instantly given; the cannon fired on the living mass, and the soldiers of Hoche, torn in pieces by the unexpected discharge, were falling into confusion and preparing to fly, when a loud shout from the other side announced the success of the escalading party under Menaye, and the light of the cannons showed them the tricolor flag flying on the highest part of the fort. At this joyful sight the Republicans returned with fury to the charge, the walls were quickly scaled, and the Royalists driven from their posts with such precipitation, that a large park of artillery placed in one of the most advanced quarters was abandoned (2).

Meanwhile, Puisaye and Vauban, who were awakened by the noise, made ineffectual efforts to rally the fugitives in the Peninsula. It was no longer possible; terror had seized every heart; emigrants, Chouans, men and women, rushed in confusion towards the beach, while Hoche, vigorously following up

They are  
driven into  
the Sea and  
capitulate.

his success, was driving them before him at the point of the bayonet. Eleven hundred brave men, the remains of the emigrant legions, in vain formed their ranks, and demanded with loud cries to be led back to regain the fort. Puisaye had gone on board the English squadron, in order to put in safety his correspondence, which would have compromised almost the whole of Brittany, and the young and gallant Sombreuil could only draw up his little corps on the last extremity of the sand, while

(1) Th. vii. 481—485. Jom. vii. 157—159.  
Beauch. iii. 495—499.

(2) Jom. vii. 162—166. Th. vii. 488—490. Lac,  
xii. 342, 343. Beauch. iii. 509, 517.

the surrounding waves were filled with unfortunate fugitives, striving, amidst loud cries, and showers of balls, to gain the fishing barks which hovered in the distance (1). Many of these boats sunk from the crowds which filled them, and seven hundred persons lost their lives in that way. The English fleet, from the violence of the tempest, was unable to approach the shore, and the remains of the emigrants were supported only by the fire of an English corvette which swept the beach. At length the Republicans, penetrated with admiration for the noble conduct of their enemies, called out to them to lay down their arms, and they should be treated as prisoners of war; and Sombreuil, with generous devotion, stipulated that the soldiers should be treated as prisoners of war, and the emigrants allowed to embark, without providing any thing for his own personal safety (2). The capitulation was agreed to by Humbert and the officers present, though Hoche was not implicated in it; and upon its assurance an officer was despatched through the surf, who, with great difficulty, reached the corvette, and stopped its destructive fire (3). The wretched fugitives, numbers of whom were women, who had crowded round this last band of their defenders, now rushed in despair into the waves, deeming instant destruction preferable to the lingering torments awaiting them from their conquerors; from the beach, the Republicans fired at their heads, while many of the Royalist officers in despair, fell on their swords, and others had their hands cut off in clinging to the boats which were already loaded with fugitives. Though numbers were drowned, yet many were saved by the skill and intrepidity of the boats of the British fleet, who advanced to their assistance (4). One of the last boats which approached the British squadron contained the Duke of Levis, severely wounded. Such was the multitude which crowded the shore, that the British boats were compelled to keep off for fear of being sunk by the numbers who rushed into them. "Approach," exclaimed the French to the boatmen, "we ask you only to take up our commander, who is bleeding to death." The ensign-bearer of the regiment of Hervilly added, "Only save my standard and I die content:" with heroic self-devotion they handed up their leader and standard, and returned to the Republican fire, which speedily sent them to the bottom.

Tallien, whom the Convention had sent down with full power, as Commissioner of government to Quiberon Bay, made an atrocious use of this victory, and stained with ineffaceable disgrace the glory of his triumph over Robespierre. In defiance of the verbal capitulation entered into with the Royalists by Humbert and the officers engaged in the combat, he caused the the emigrant prisoners, eight hundred in number, to be conveyed to Auray, where they were confined in the churches, which had been converted into temporary prisons, while he himself repaired to Paris, where, by a cruel report, he prevailed upon the government to disregard the capitulation, and bathe their hands in the blood of the noblest men

Atrocious  
Cruelty  
of the Repub-  
licans.

(1) Th. vii. 492. Lac. xii. 343. Puisaye, vi. 511.

(2) Jom. vii. 171. Lac. xii. 350. Beauch. iii. 509, 520, 521, 522.

(3) Humbert advanced with the white flag, and said aloud, so as to be heard by the whole line, "Lay down your arms; surrender; the prisoners shall be spared." At the same time he asked a conference with the Royalist general; Sombreuil advanced, and after a few minutes conversation with the Republican, returned to his own troops and called out aloud, that he had agreed on a capitula-

tion with the general of the enemy. Many of his officers, more accustomed to the treachery of the Republicans, refused to trust to their promises, and declared, that they would rather fight it out to the last. "What," said Sombreuil, "do you not believe the word of a Frenchman?"—"The faith of the Republicans," said Lantivy, "is so well known to me, that I will engage we shall all be sacrificed." His prophecy proved too true.

(4) Lac. xii. 350. Jom. vii. 168, 169. Th. vii. 493. Beauch. iii. 526, 527.

in France. "The emigrants," said he, "that vile assemblage of ruffians, sustained by Pitt, those execrable authors of all our disasters, have been driven into the waves by the brave soldiers of the Republic; but the waves have thrown them back upon the sword of the law. In vain have they sent forward some flags of truce to obtain conditions; what legal bond can exist between us and rebels, if it be not that of vengeance and death?" In pursuance of this advice the Convention decreed that the prisoners should be put to death, notwithstanding the efforts of the brave Hoche, who exerted himself for the side of mercy (1).

Noble conduct and  
Death of the  
Royalist  
Prisoners.

The unfortunate men were soon aware of the fate which awaited them; and their conduct in the last extremity reflected as much honour on the Royalist, as their murder did disgrace on the Republican cause. The ministers of religion penetrated into those asylums of approaching death, and the Christian faith supported the last hours of their numerous inmates. An old priest, covered with rags and filth, one of the few who had escaped the sword of the Republicans, conveyed its consolations to the numerous captives; and they joined with him in the last offices of religion. Their last prayers were for their King, their country, and the pardon of their enemies. To the executioners they gave the garments which were still at their disposal. Such was the impression produced by the touching spectacle, that even the Republican soldiers, who had been brought up without any sort of religious impressions, were moved to tears, and joined, uncovered, in the ceremonies which they then for the first time in their lives had witnessed (2).

When brought before the military commission, Sombreuil disdained to make any appeal in favour of himself; but asserted, in the most solemn terms, that the capitulation had guaranteed the lives of his followers, and that their execution was a crime which neither God nor man would pardon. When led out to execution, he refused to have his eyes bandaged; and when desired to kneel down to receive the fatal discharge, replied, after a moment's reflection, "I will do so; but I bend one knee to my God, and another to my sovereign." The other victims who were led forth insisted in such vehement terms on the capitulation, that the Republican officers were obliged to give them a respite; but the Convention refused to listen to the dictates of humanity, and they were all ordered for execution. Seven hundred and eleven perished with a constancy worthy of a happier fate; the remainder were suffered to escape by the indulgence of the soldiers who were intrusted with their massacre, and the humanity of the commissioner who succeeded Tallien in the command. These atrocious scenes took place in a meadow near Auray, still held in the highest veneration by the inhabitants, by whom it is termed the field of martyrs (3).

Rapid decline of the  
Royalist  
Cause in the  
West of  
France.

The broken remains of the Quiberon expedition were landed in the Isle of Houat, where they were soon after joined by an expedition of two thousand five hundred men from England, which took possession of the Isle-Dieu, and where the Count d'Artois assumed the command. The insurgents of la Vendée, under Charette, marched in three columns to the Sables d'Olonne to join the expedition; but so rapid and decisive were the measures of Hoche, that they were soon assailed by a superior

(1) Lac. xii. 355. Beauch. iii. 530. Jom. vii. 170.

(2) Lac. xii. 356. Beauch. iii. 529, 530, 530.

(3) Lac. xii. 356, 359. Beauch. iii. 532, 530. Jom. vii. 171.

force, and compelled to seek safety by separating in the forest of Aizenay. Several partial insurrections at the same time broke out in Brittany; but from want of concert among the Royalist chiefs, they came to nothing. Soon after, the English expedition not having met with the expected co-operation abandoned Isle-Dieu, which was found to be totally unserviceable as a naval station, and returned with the Count d'Artois to Great-Britain. From that moment the affairs of the Royalists rapidly declined in all the Western Provinces; the efforts of the Chouans and Vendéens were confined to an inconsiderable guerilla warfare; and it was finally extinguished in the succeeding year by the great army, and able dispositions of Hoche, whom the Directory invested, at the end of the campaign, with the supreme command. It is painful to reflect how different might have been the issue of the campaign had Great-Britain really put forth its strength in the contest; and instead of landing a few thousand men on a coast bristling with bayonets, sent thirty thousand men to make head against the Republicans, till the Royalist forces were so organized as to be able to take the field with regular troops (1).

War on the  
Rhine.

The situation of the armies on the northern and eastern frontier remained the same as at the conclusion of the last campaign; but their strength and efficiency had singularly diminished during the severe winter and spring which followed. Moreau had received the command of the army of the North, encamped in Holland; Jourdan, that of the Sambre and Meuse, stationed on the Rhine, near Cologne; Pichegru, that of the army of the Rhine, cantoned from Mayence to Strasburg. But all these forces were in a state of extreme penury, from the fall of the paper money, in which their pay was received; and totally destitute of the equipments necessary for carrying on a campaign. They had

Extreme  
Penury and  
Difficulties  
of the Re-  
publicans on  
the Rhine.

neither caissons, nor horses, nor magazines; the soldiers were almost naked, and the generals even frequently in want of the necessities of life, from the failure of the eight francs a-month, in silver, which formed the inconsiderable, but necessary supplement to their paper salaries. Those who were stationed in foreign countries, contrived indeed, by contributions upon the vanquished, to supply the deficiency of their nominal pay; and the luxury in which they lived, formed a strange and painful contrast to the destitute situation of their brethren on the soil of the Republic. Jourdan had neither a bridge equipage to enable him to cross the Rhine, nor a sufficiency of horses to move his artillery and baggage; Kléber, in front of Mayence, had not a quarter of the artillery or stores necessary for the siege of the place. Discipline had relaxed with the long-continued sufferings of the soldiers; and the inactivity, consequent on such a state of destitution, had considerably diminished their military spirit. Multitudes had taken advantage of the relaxation of authority following the fall of Robespierre, to desert and return to their homes; and the government, so far from being able to bring them back to their colours, were not even able to levy conscripts in the interior, to supply their place. Numbers resorted to Paris, where the Convention were happy to form them into battalions, for their own protection against the fury of the Jacobins. Soon the intelligence spread that the deserters were undisturbed in the interior; and this extended the contagion to such a degree, that in a short time a fourth of the effective force had returned to their homes. The soldiers thought they had done enough for their country when they had repelled the

(1) Beauch. iii. 540, and iv. 29. Mig. ii. 402. Th. vii. 433. Jom. vii. 56, 240, 249.

enemy from its frontiers, and advanced its standards to the Rhine; the generals, doubtful of their authority, did not venture to take severe measures with the refractory; and those who remained, discouraged by the loss of so great a number of their comrades, felt that depression which is the surest forerunner of defeat (1).

State of the  
contending  
Armies.

The Austrians, on the other hand, having made the greatest efforts during the winter to reinforce their armies, and not having as yet experienced any part of the exhaustion which extraordinary exertion had brought on the Republican forces, were in a much better state, both in point of numbers, discipline, and equipment. Including the contingents of Swabia and Bavaria, their forces on the Rhine had been raised to 150,000 men; while the French forces on the same frontier, though nominally amounting to 370,000 men, could only muster 144,450 in the field (2). But such was the state of destitution of these forces, that the cavalry was almost completely dismounted; and Jourdan could not move a few marches from his supplies, until he got twenty-five thousand horses for the service of his artillery (3).

The Rhine, that majestic stream, so long the boundary of the Roman empire, separated the contending armies from the Alps to the ocean. The Imperialists alone had the advantage arising from the possession of Mayence. That bulwark of the empire had been put into the best possible state of defence, and gave the Allies the means of making an irruption with security upon

June 24, 1795.

Early inactivity of the  
Allies.  
Fall of Lux-  
embourg.

the left bank. Notwithstanding this great advantage, such was the consternation produced by their former reverses, that they remained inactive on the right bank of the river till the end of June, when Marshal Bender, having exhausted all his means of subsistence and seeing no hope of relief, was compelled to surrender the important fortress of Luxembourg to the Republican generals (4). Ten thousand men, and an immense train of artillery, on this occasion, fell into the hands of the victors.

Secret Ne-  
gotiations  
between  
Pichegru  
and the Al-  
lies.

While the Imperialists were thus allowing the bulwark of the Lower-Rhine to fall into the hands of the enemy, the Prince of Condé, on the Upper-Rhine, was engaged in a negotiation, by which he hoped to procure the frontier fortresses of Alsace for the Bourbon Princes. This Prince, whose little corps formed part of the left wing of the Austrian army, was engaged in a correspondence with the malecontents in Alsace; and from them he learned that Pichegru was not altogether inaccessible to negotiation. In fact, this illustrious man was, on many ac-

(1) Mig. ii. 402. Th. vii. 434. Jom. vii. 56, 58.  
St.-Cyr, iii. 31, 34, 41, 50.

(2) The distribution of the Republican forces at

the commencement of the campaign was as follows:  
in effective troops, deducting the detachments and  
sick [Jom. vii. 56:] :

	Active.	Garrisons.	Remount, in- clud. Garrison.
North, . . . . .	67,910	29,000	136,230
Sambre and Meuse, . . . . .	87,430	66,000	179,300
Rhine and Moselle, . . . . .	56,820	96,800	193,670
Alps, . . . . .	14,000	4,800	21,000
Italy, . . . . .	27,500	24,000	93,500
Eastern Pyrenees, . . . . .	43,290	4,000	52,750
Western do. . . . .	33,780	5,000	75,100
West, . . . . .	42,000	"	76,300
Shores of Brittany, . . . . .	51,000	"	75,400
Cherbourg, . . . . .	26,000	"	27,700
	<b>449,930</b>	<b>229,600</b>	<b>656,000</b>

(3) Jom. vii. 38, 59. St.-Cyr, iii. 35.

(4) Th. vii. 435. Jom. vii. 61.

counts, discontented both with his own situation and that of the country. Like Dumourier and La Fayette, he had been horror-struck with the atrocities of the Convention, and saw no hope of permanent amendment in the weak and disunited government which had succeeded it; while, at the same time, the state of destitution to which in common with all the army he was reduced by the fall of the assignats, in which their pay was received, rendered him discontented with a government which made such returns to great patriotic services. During all the extremities of the Reign of Terror, Pichegru and his army, instead of obeying the sanguinary orders of the Dictators, had done every thing in their power to furnish the means of escape to their victims. He had nobly refused to execute the inhuman decree, which forbade the Republican soldiers to make prisoners of the English troops. His soldiers, after the conquest of Holland, had set a rare example of discipline; and the sway he had acquired over them was such as to prevent all the license and insubordination which had followed the conquest of Flanders by the forces of Dumouriez. In these circumstances, nothing was more natural or more laudable, than that the same General who had secured the independence of his country by his arms, should strive to establish its internal prosperity, by the restoration of a constitutional throne; and it is certain that he engaged in a correspondence with the Prince of Condé for the attainment of this object. The Republican historians allege that his fidelity was shaken by different motives; that his passion for pleasure was restrained by the elusory nature of his pay, which, although nominally four thousand francs a-month, was, in reality, only one hundred francs, from the depreciation of the assignats, and that he yielded to the offer of a marshal's baton, the government of Alsace, a pension of 200,000 francs, the chateau and park of Chambold, and a million in silver. No decisive evidence has yet been produced on the subject; but it is certain that, after six months consumed in mysterious communication, Pichegru broke off the negotiation, and prepared to obey the orders of the Convention, by commencing the campaign (1).

Inactivity of the Austrians on the Upper Rhine. Wurmser, to whom the cabinet of Vienna had intrusted the command of its forces on the Upper Rhine, remained till the beginning of September without taking any step. Mutually afraid, the hostile armies occupied the opposite banks of the Rhine, without making any movement to disquiet each other. His forces, including garrisons, amounted to eighty thousand men; while those of Clairfait, including the same species of force, were ninety-six thousand. The formidable state of defence in which Mayence had been placed, left no hope of reducing it without a regular siege; while a squadron of gun-boats on the Rhine gave the Allies the command both of that stream and of the numerous islands which lay on its bosom (2).

Republicans cross that River. Sept. 6, 1795. Jourdan, having at length procured the necessary bridge equipment, prepared to cross the Rhine in the beginning of September. On the 6th of that month he effected the passage without any serious opposition, at Eichelcamp, Neuwied, and Dusseldorf, and compelled the garrison of the latter town to capitulate. After repulsing the Austrian corps in that vicinity, he advanced slowly towards the Lahn, and established himself on that stream a fortnight afterwards. Meanwhile Pichegru, in obedience to the orders of government, crossed the Upper Rhine at

(1) Th. vii. 441. Lac. xiii. 86. Jom., vii. 62, 67. St.-Cyr, iii. 69, 71, 73.

(2) Jom., vii. 179. St.-Cyr, iii. 96, 97.

Manheim, and, by the terrors of a bombardment, compelled that important city, one of the principal bulwarks of Germany, to capitulate. This unexpected event threatened to change the fortune of the war; for Pichegru, now securely based on the Rhine, seemed equally in a situation to combine with Jourdan for a general attack on the Allied Forces, or to direct his arms to the reduction of Mayence. Alarmed by these successes, the Austrian Generals made the most prudent dispositions which could have been adopted to arrest the enemy: Clairfait, unable, after the loss of Manheim, to defend the line of the Lahn, abandoned his position on that river, and fell back behind the Mein; while Jourdan, following his opponent, and leaving a division before Ehrenbreitstein, descended into the rich valley of the Mein, and invested Mayence on the right bank of the Rhine, at the same time that Pichegru was debouching from Manheim (1).

Defensive  
Dispositions  
of the Aus-  
trians.

Sept. 22.

Able and  
vigorous  
Measures of  
Clairfait.

In these critical circumstances, Clairfait displayed a degree of vigour and ability, which led to the most important results. Reinforced by fifteen thousand Hungarian recruits, that able General deemed himself in a situation to resume the offensive; and, accumulating his forces on his own right, he succeeded, by a skilful march, in turning the French left, and forcing them to fall back into a situation where they had the enemy in their front, and the Rhine in their rear. Jourdan was now in the most perilous position; his communications being threatened, his flank turned, and his rear resting on a great river, exposed his army to destruction in the event of defeat. To avert the catastrophe of the French army a century before at Turin, no other course remained but to raise the siege of Mayence, and fall with his whole forces on Clairfait, who was now in communication with Wurmser, or to abandon all his positions, and re-cross the Rhine. The disorganized state of his army rendered the latter project, afterwards so ably practised by Napoléon before Mantua, impracticable; and therefore he commenced his retreat. It was conducted in the utmost confusion; cannon, men, and horses, arrived pell-mell at the bridges over the Rhine, and hardly fifty men of any corps were to be found together when they regained the right bank. The loss in men was inconsiderable, but the moral consequences of the retrograde movement were equivalent to a severe defeat. Had Clairfait been aware of the circumstance, a great and decisive blow might have been struck; for General Marceau, to whom the blockade of Ehrenbreitstein had been intrusted, having burned his flotilla when he raised the siege, some of the burning vessels were carried down by the stream to Neuwied, where they set fire to the bridge established at that place, which was speedily consumed. Kleber with twenty-five thousand men, who had not as yet repassed, was now in a desperate situation; but, fortunately for him, the Allies were ignorant of the accident, and Clairfait about the same time relinquished the pursuit and drew his forces towards Mayence (2), where he meditated operations, which soon produced the most important results.

Suddenly abandoning the pursuit of the French left wing, this intrepid General, turned by forced marches to Mayence, at the head of a chosen corps, and at daybreak on the following morning issued out by several columns to attack the lines of circumvallation, which were still in the hands of the Republicans on the left bank of the river. These lines, whose

(1) Jom. vii. 19. Toul. v. 314. St. Cyr, iii. 105, 110.

(2) Toul. v. 314, 316. Jom. vii. 200, 202. St. Cyr, iii. 150, 159, 189, 192.



He attacks the Lines round Mayence. remains still excite the admiration of the traveller, were of immense extent, and required an army for their defence. The French army had been engaged for a year in their construction, and they were garrisoned by thirty thousand men. The secret of the march of the Imperial army had been so well preserved, that the besiegers were first apprised of their arrival by the sight of the formidable columns which advanced to storm their intrenchments. The Imperialists advanced in three columns, and in admirable order, to the assault; and such was the consternation of the Republicans, that they abandoned the first line almost without opposition. Such an event is generally decisive of the result in the defence of intrenchments; because the defenders are thunderstruck by seeing their redoubts forced in any quarter, and, instead of thinking of driving back the enemy as in the open field, betake themselves to a precipitate flight. So it proved on the present occasion. The measures of the Austrians were so well taken, that the French found themselves assailed in all quarters at once; they made for some time an obstinate defence in the second line, but at length, perceiving that they were turned by other forces which had crossed below Mayence, they fell into confusion, and fled in all directions. Their loss in this brilliant affair was three thousand men, and the whole artillery, magazines, and stores, which they had collected with so much care for the siege of the bulwark of Germany. This attack on the part of Clairfait was combined with other operations along the whole line, from Coblenz to Mannheim. On the same day on which it took place, an island, which the Republicans had fortified a league above Coblenz, was captured, with two battalions which composed its garrison; and by this success, which rendered the evacuation of the tête du pont of Neuwied unavoidable, they were entirely driven below Mayence to the left bank of the river. At the same time, Wurmser attacked and carried the tête du pont erected by Pichegru on the Neckar; and this success, coupled with the great blow struck by Clairfait, Oct. 31. compelled Pichegru to retire behind the Pfirim, which was not accomplished without the utmost confusion. The small number of troops which Clairfait had brought to the left bank of the Rhine, alone saved the Republicans on this occasion from the greatest disasters (1).

Republicans are driven from before Mannheim. Pichegru had left a garrison ten thousand strong in Mannheim, and the position which he had occupied enabled him to communicate with the place by his right flank. Despairing of being able to effect its reduction as long as this communication was preserved open, the Austrians resolved to dislodge the French from their position. For this purpose, Clairfait was reinforced with twelve thousand men from the army of the Upper Rhine, and he immediately made preparations for an attack. It Nov. 10. took place on the following day, and after an obstinate resistance, the Republicans were compelled to abandon the line of the Pfirim, and retire behind the Elsbach, leaving Mannheim to its own resources (2).

While these important events were going forward on the Upper Rhine, Jourdan, with his defeated and discouraged force, was suffering the most cruel perplexity on the Lower. His army was with difficulty reorganized, and put in a condition for active service; and the Directory having meanwhile succeeded to the helm of affairs, Carnot transmitted to him the most pressing

(1) Toul. v. 320, 322. Jom. vii. 252, 259. St.-Cyr, iii. 200, 202.

(2) Toul. v. 324. Th. viii. 93. St.-Cyr, iii. 210, 219.

orders to advance to the succour of Mannheim, which was now severely pressed  
 26th Nov. by the Austrians. At length, towards the end of November, he put himself in motion at the head of forty thousand men, and advanced to the Natre, in the midst of the most dreadful weather; but all his efforts were in vain. The central position of Clairfait and Wurmser, both covered  
 Mannheim the siege of Mannheim, and prevented the junction of the Republican  
 Capitulates.  
 28th Nov. armies; the defiles by which a communication could have been maintained, were all in the hands of the Imperialists, and after several unsuccessful attacks, Jourdan was obliged to fall back, leaving Mannheim to its fate. That important place, with a garrison of nine thousand men, capitulated at the same time to Wurmser (1).

Wurmser drives  
 Pichegru to the Lines of the Quiech. This important event was decisive of the fate of the campaign. Wurmser, now relieved from all apprehensions as to his communications, brought his whole forces to the left bank of the Rhine, and drove back Pichegru to the lines of the Quiech, and the neighbourhood of Landau; while Clairfait pressed Jourdan so severely, that he began to construct an intrenched camp at Traerbach, with a view to secure his passage over the Moselle. In this disastrous state it was with the utmost joy that  
 16th Dec. he received a proposition from the Austrians, who, as well as their opponents, were exhausted with the fatigues of the campaign, for a suspension of arms during the winter (2), in virtue of which, a line of demarcation was drawn between the contending parties; and both armies were put into winter-quarters on the left bank of the Rhine.

Maritime operations. The French marine was so completely broken by the disasters in the Mediterranean, and at L'Orient, that nothing more of consequence took place at sea during the remainder of the year. The English availed themselves of their maritime supremacy to make themselves masters of the important station of the Cape of Good Hope, which surrendered to Sir James Craig on the 16th of September. Unable to act in large squadrons, the French confined themselves to mere predatory expeditions; and the vast extent of the English commerce afforded them an ample field for this species of warfare, from which, towards the close of the year, they derived great success (3).

Results of the Campaign. By the result of this campaign, the Allies gained considerable advantages. The career of French conquest was checked, the Republican soldiers driven with disgrace behind the Rhine; and while the Imperial forces, so lately disheartened and desponding, were pressing forward with the energy of conquest, their opponents, distracted and disorderly, had lost all the spirit with which they formerly were animated. The movements of Clairfait and Wurmser proved that they had profited by the example of their adversaries; their tactics were no longer confined to a war of posts, or the establishment of a cordon over an extensive line of country, but showed that they were aware of the value of an interior line of operations, and of the importance of bringing an overwhelming force to the decisive point. By adopting these principles, they checked the career of conquest, restored the spirit of their troops, and not only counterbalanced the disadvantage of inferior numbers, but inflicted severe losses upon their adversaries.

This result was the natural effect of the continuance of the contest. The energy of a democracy is often formidable during a period of popular excite-

(1) Jom. vii. 270, 272, 274. Toul. v. 324. Th. viii. 115. St.-Cyr, iii. 257.

(2) Jom. vii. 276. Th. viii. 130. Toul. v. 323. St.-Cyr, ii. 240.

(3) Ann. Reg. 1795, p. 139. Jom. vii. 330.

ment, and is capable of producing unparalleled exertions for a limited period; but it rarely succeeds in maintaining a lasting contest, with a regular and organized government. The efforts of the populace resemble the spring of a wild beast; if the first burst fails, they rarely attempt a second. During the invasions of 1793 and 1794, the French nation were animated with an extraordinary spirit, and urged to the defence of their country by every motive which can sway a multitude; but their efforts, how great soever, necessarily and rapidly declined. During the contest they had exhausted the means of maintaining a prolonged war; the vehemence of their exertions, and the tyranny by which they were called forth, rendered it impossible that they could be continued. The nation, accordingly, which had 1,200,000 men on foot during the invasion of 1794, could not muster a third of the number in the following campaign; and the victor of Fleurus, within a year after his triumph, was compelled to yield to an inferior enemy.

Feeble character of the War up to this period. Nothing also is more remarkable than the comparatively bloodless character of the war, up to this period. The battle of Jemappes, which gave Flanders to Dumouriez; that of Nerwinde, which restored it to the Imperialists; that of Fleurus, which gave it back to the Republicans, were all concluded at a cost of less than five thousand men to the vanquished; and the loss sustained by the French at storming the lines of Mayence, which decided the fate of the German campaign, was only three thousand men. Whereas, the loss of the Austrians at Aspern was thirty thousand; that of the Russians at Borodino, forty thousand; that of the Allies at Waterloo, twenty thousand; and out of seven thousand five hundred native English who conquered at Albuera, hardly two thousand were unwounded at the conclusion of the fight. So much more desperately did the parties fight as the contest advanced; so much more vehement were the passions excited in its latter stages; and so much more terrible was the struggle when the Republicans, instead of the lukewarm soldiers of the South, met the sturdy inhabitants of the North of Europe.

Great Results which might have followed a vigorous exertion of the Allied strength; Every thing, therefore, conspires to indicate, that, by a concentrated and vigorous effort, after the first burst of French patriotism was over, the objects of the war might have been achieved; not certainly the forcing of a hateful dynasty upon France, but the compelling it to retire within those limits which are consistent with the peace of Europe, and give up its attempts to propagate its revolutionary principles in other states. Had Prussia, instead of weakly deserting the alliance, in the beginning of 1793, sent 100,000 men to the Rhine, to support the Austrian troops; had Great-Britain raised 300,000 soldiers, instead of 120,000, and sent eighty thousand native English to Flanders, instead of five thousand emigrants to Quiberon Bay, no one can doubt, that in the state of exhaustion in which France then was, the Republic would have been compelled to abandon all its conquests. The moment her armies were forced back from foreign states, and thrown upon their own resources; the moment that war was prevented from maintaining war, the weakness arising from her financial embarrassments, and blighted industry, would have become apparent. The great error of the Allies, and, above all, of England, at this period, was, that they did not make sufficiently vigorous efforts at the commencement; and thought it enough, in a struggle with the desperate energy of a revolutionary state, to exert the moderate strength of an ordinary con-

test. Nothing is so ill judged, in such a situation, as the niggardly conduct which prolongs a war; by spending L.50,000,000 more at its commencement, Great-Britain might have saved L.500,000,000; by sending an army worthy of herself to the Continent in 1793, she might have then achieved the triumph of 1815.

From the  
Lassitude of  
the French. It was to this period of lassitude and financial embarrassments, necessarily consequent upon a series of extraordinary revolutionary exertions, that Mr. Pitt always looked for the successful termination of the war. Possibly even with the slight efforts which alone were then thought practicable by this country, his expectations might have been realized before many years had elapsed, if the ordinary course of human affairs had continued. But the hand of fate was on the curtain, a new era was about to open on human affairs, and a resistless impulse to be given for a period to French ambition, by the genius of that wonderful man who has since chained the history of Europe to his own biography (1).

(1) Scott's *Napoléon*, ii. ad fin.

## CHAPTER XIX.

FRENCH REPUBLIC—FROM THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIRECTORY.

## ARGUMENT.

General reaction against the Reign of Terror—Universal Transports at the Fall of Robespierre—Gradual Fall of the Committee of Public Safety—And Rise of the Thermidorians—Contests between the two Parties—Rise of the Jeunesse dorée Their Contests with the Jacobins—They close their Hall and destroy their Power—Trial of the Prisoners from Nantes—Their Acquittal, and the Trial of Carrier—Dreadful Atrocities divulged during its Progress—He is Condemned—Return to Humanity in the Convention—Public Manners during this period—Bals des Victimes—Gradual abolition of the Revolutionary Measures—Of the Law of the Maximum, and an Amnesty to the Children of Persons condemned during the Revolution—Impeachment of Billaud Varennes and the Jacobin Leaders—Extreme Distress and Agitation in Paris—Revolt of the Populace—Defeat of the Insurgents—Humanity of the Thermidorians after their Victory—Condemned Prisoners are transported to Ham—And thence to Cayenne—Fresh Efforts of the Jacobins Excessive misery at Paris—Great Insurrection in May—Convention Besieged—Heroic conduct of Boissy-d'Anglas They obtain the mastery of the Convention—But are at length defeated by the Committees and the Jeunesse dorée—Trial and Condemnation of Romme and the Jacobin Remnant—Condemnation of the murderer of Féraud—Disarming of the Faubourg St.-Antoine—And final termination of the rule of the Multitude—Farther progress of humane Measures, and abolition of the Revolutionary Tribunal—Formation of a new Constitution—General abandonment of Democratic Principles from the force of Experience—Violent reaction in the South of France—Generous conduct of the Duke of Orléans' Sons—Death and last days of Louis XVII in Prison—Liberation of the Duchess d'Angoulême—Continued Captivity of La Fayette—General interest in his behalf—Completion of the new Constitution—The Constitution of the Directory—Elective Franchise confined to the class of Proprietors—Vast agitation in Paris and throughout France at these changes—Coalition of the Royalists, and sections of the National Guard—Vehement Royalist Declarations at the Sections—Extreme Agitation at Paris—Convention throw themselves on the Army—Sections openly resolve to revolt—Meeting of the Electors at the Théâtre-Français—They resolve to fight—Measures of the Convention—Failure of Menou against the Insurgents—Armed force of the Convention intrusted to Barras and Napoleon—His decisive Measures in seizing the Artillery—Combat round the Tuileries—Defeat of the Sections—Establishment of Military despotism—Humanity of the Convention after their Victory—Election of the Council of Ancients, and Five Hundred—Reflections on the History of the Convention—Slow growth of all durable Human Institutions—General reflections on the History of the Revolution, and the causes of its Disasters.

“It is a sad calamity,” says Jeremy Taylor, “to see a kingdom spoiled, and a church afflicted; the priests slain with the sword, and the blood of nobles mingled with cheaper sand; religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted; government turned, and laws ashamed; judges decreeing in fear and covetousness, and the ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is sacred. And what shall make recompense for this heap of sorrows when God shall send such swords of fire? Even the mercies of God, which shall then be made public, when the people shall have suffered for their sins. For I have known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but little clusters to the wine-press; but when the Lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant, and make it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy

bunches, and made account of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. It is thus of an afflicted kingdom cured of its surfeits and punished for its sins, it bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and his anger into mercy (1).”

Never were these truths more strongly exemplified than in France during the progress of the Revolution. Each successive convulsion had darkened the political atmosphere; anguish and suffering incessantly increased; virtue and religion seemed banished from the earth; relentless cruelty reigned triumphant. The bright dawn of the morning, to which so many millions had turned in thankfulness, was soon overcast, and darkness deeper than midnight overspread the world. “But there is a point of depression in human affairs,” says Hume, “from which the change is necessarily for the better.” This change is not owing to any oscillation between good and evil, in the transactions of the world, but to the reaction which is always produced by long continued suffering. Wherever the tendency of institutions is erroneous, an under current begins to flow, destined to correct their imperfections; when they become destructive, it overwhelms them.

General re-  
action  
against the  
Reign of  
Terror.

The result of the conspiracy of Robespierre and the Municipality proved that this point had been reached under the reign of Terror. On all former occasions, since the meeting of the States-General, the party which revolted against the constituted authorities had been victorious; on that it was vanquished. The Committees of the Assembly, the subsisting government, crushed a conspiracy headed by the powerful despot who wielded the revolutionary energy of France, and was supported by the terrible force of the Faubourgs, which no former authority had been able to withstand. This single circumstance demonstrated that the revolutionary movement had reached its ascendant, and that the opposite principles of order and justice were beginning to resume their sway. From that moment the anarchy and passions of the people subsided, the storms of the moral world began to be stilled, through the receding darkness the ancient landmarks dimly appeared, and the sun of Heaven at length broke through the clouds which enveloped him.

“*Defuit saxis agitatus humor;  
Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes;  
Et minax nam sic voluere, ponto  
Unda recumbit.*”

An interesting episode in the annals of the Revolution occurred in the prisons during the contest which preceded the fall of the tyrant. From the agitation and cries in the streets, the captives were aware that a popular movement was impending, and a renewal of the massacres of 2d September was anticipated from the frantic multitude. Henriot had been heard in the Place de Carrousel to pronounce the ominous words, “We must purge the prisons.” The sound of the générale and of the tocsin made them imagine that their last hour had arrived, and they embraced each other with tears, exclaiming, “We are all now eighty years of age.” After two hours of breathless anxiety,

(1) Jeremy Taylor, vi. 182, Heber's Edit.

they heard the decree of the Convention cried through the streets, which declared Robespierre *hors la loi*, and by daybreak intelligence arrived that he was overthrown. The transports which ensued may be imagined; ten thousand prisoners were relieved from the prospect of instant death. In one chamber, a female prisoner, who was to have been brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal that very day, was made acquainted with the intelligence by means of signs from a woman in the street, before she ventured to give public demonstration of her joy; her name became afterwards memorable, it was JOSÉPHINE BEAUHARNAIS, future Empress of France (1).

The transports were the same through all France. The passengers precipitated themselves from the public conveyances, embraced the bystanders, exclaiming, "My friends rejoice, Robespierre is no more!" Three hundred thousand captives in the prisons were freed from the terror of death; five hundred thousand trembling fugitives issued from their retreats, and embraced each other with frantic joy on the public roads (2). An epitaph designed for his tomb expressed in powerful language the public opinion on the consequence of prolonging his life :

"Passant, ne pleure point son sort,  
Car s'il vivait tu serais mort."

Universal  
transports  
which his  
Fall occasioned.

No words can convey an idea of the impression which the overthrow of Robespierre produced in Europe. The ardent and enthusiastic in every country had hailed the beginning of the French Revolution as the dawn of a brighter day in the political world, and in proportion to the warmth of their hopes had been the grievousness of their disappointment at the terrible shades by which it was so early overcast. The fall of the tyrant revived these hopes, and put an end to these apprehensions; the moral laws of nature were felt to be still in operation; the tyranny had only existed till it had purged the world of a guilty race, and then it was itself destroyed. The thoughtful admired the wisdom of Providence, which had made the wickedness of men the instrument of their own destruction; the pious beheld in their fall an immediate manifestation of the Divine justice.

The Revolution of 9th Thermidor, however, was by no means, as is commonly supposed, the reaction of virtue against wickedness; it was the effort of one set of assassins threatened with death against another. The leaders of the revolt in the Convention which overthrew the central government, Billaud Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, Fouché, Amar, Barrère, were in no respect better, in some worse, than Robespierre and St.-Just. They conspired against him, not because they hated his system, but because they perceived it was about to descend upon themselves. Little amelioration of the political system was to be expected from their exertions. It was public opinion clearly and energetically expressed after the fall of the Committee of Public Safety, which compelled them to revert to the path of humanity. But this opinion was irresistible, it forced itself upon persons the most adverse to its principles, and finally occasioned the destruction of the very men who, for their own sakes, had brought about the first resistance to the reign of blood (3).

Gradual  
fall of the  
Committee  
of Public  
Safety.

The Convention had vanquished Robespierre by means of a unanimous effort, headed and directed by the committees; but this revulsion of public feeling proved too strong for the committees

(1) Mémoires de Joséphine, i. 327. Lac. xii. 124,  
125. Mig. ii. 348—349.

(2) Lac. xii. 126, 128.

(3) Hist. de la Conv. iv. 215, 218.

themselves. The charm of the Decemviral Government was broken when its head was destroyed. On the day after the fall of Robespierre there were but two parties in Paris, that of the committees, who strove to maintain the remnant of their power, and that of the liberators, who laboured to subvert them. The latter were from the first distinguished by the name of *Thermidoriens*, from the day on which their triumph was achieved. Tallien was at their head, and they soon numbered among their supporters all the generous youth of the metropolis (1).

The party of the committees was paralysed by the fall of the Municipality of Paris, sixty of the most obnoxious members of which had been executed the day after the death of Robespierre. Their influence consisted only in the possession of the machinery of government, and in the vigour of some of their members, all of whom saw no safety to themselves but in the maintenance of the Revolutionary Government. Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, Barrère, Vadier, Amar, and Carnot, constituted a body, influenced by the same principles, capable of maintaining their authority in the most difficult circumstances, but after the counter-revolution of the 9th Thermidor, the current of public opinion was irresistible (2).

And rise of the Thermidoriens. The Thermidoriens were composed of the whole centre of the Assembly, the remnant of the Royalists, and the party of Danton. Boissy d'Anglas, Sièyes, Cambacérès, Chénier, Thibaudeau, from the moderate party, ranged themselves beside Tallien, Fréron, Legendre, Barras, Bourdon de l'Oise, Rovère, and others, who had followed the colours of Danton. Four of this party were chosen to replace the executed Members of the Committee of Public Safety, and soon succeeded in moderating its sanguinary measures. But great caution was necessary in effecting the change. The Jacobins were still powerful from their numbers, their discipline, and their connection with the affiliated societies throughout France; and their early support of the Revolution identified them in the eyes of the populace with its fortunes. Hence the Thermidoriens did not venture at first to measure their strength with such antagonists, and four days after the death of Robespierre the sittings of their terrible club were resumed. But the friends of clemency daily gained accessions of strength. The seventy-three Members of the Assembly, who had protested against the violence of 31st May, were brought forth from prison, and joined their liberators (3). Such of the victims of that unhappy day as were still alive, were also restored to their places in the Assembly, and augmented the phalanx of the friends of humanity.

Contacts between the two parties. The two parties were not long in measuring their strength after their common victory. Barrère, on the part of the Committee, proposed, on the 30th July, that the Revolutionary Tribunal should be continued, and that Fouquier-Tinville should continue to act as public accuser. July 30.

At his name a murmur of indignation arose in the Assembly, and Fréron, taking advantage of the general feeling, exclaimed,—"I propose that we at length purge the earth of that monster, and that Fouquier be sent to lick up in Hell the blood which he has shed." The proposal was carried by acclamation, Barrère endeavoured to maintain the tone of authority which he had so long assumed, but it was too late. He was obliged to leave the Tribune, and the defeat of the Committee was apparent (4).

(1) Mig. ii. 348, 349. Th. vii. 3, 4. Lac. xii. 129.

(3) Mig. ii. 349, 350. Lac. xii. 129, 130. Th. vii. 16, 17.

(2) Mig. ii. 349. Th. vii. 14. Lac. xii. 128. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 224, 225.

(4) Mig. ii. 351. Lac. xii. 130. Th. vii. 37, 38.



The trial of this great criminal took place with extraordinary formality, and in the most public manner, before the Revolutionary Tribunal. It developed all the injustice and oppression of that iniquitous court; the trial of sixty or eighty prisoners in one sitting of three or four hours; the inhuman stopping of any defence, and the atrocious celerity of the condemnations. After a long process, he was condemned, and fourteen jurymen of the same Tribunal along with him. The indignation of the populace was strongly manifested, when they were led out for execution; cries, groans, and applauses, broke from the crowd as they passed along. The sombre, severe air of Fouquier, especially attracted notice; he maintained an undaunted aspect, and answered the reproaches of the people by ironical remarks on the dearth of provisions under which they laboured (1).

The next measures of the Assembly were of a humane tendency. The law of 22d Prairial against suspected persons was repealed, and though the Revolutionary Tribunal was continued, its forms were remodelled, and its vengeance directed in future chiefly against the authors of the former calamities. The captives were gradually liberated from confinement, and, instead of the fatal chariots which formerly stood at the gates of the prisons, crowds of joyous citizens were seen receiving with transport their parents or children, restored to their arms. Agreeably to the advice of Danton and Camille-Desmoulins, the captives were not all discharged at once, but they were all at length restored to their friends; and at the end of two months, out of ten thousand suspected persons, not one remained in the prisons of Paris (2).

The imprudent zeal of one of their party, however, soon convinced the Thermidoriens how necessary it was to proceed with caution in the counter-revolutionary measures. Without any general concert with his friends, Lecointre denounced Billaud, Collot, and Barrère, from the Committee of General Safety, and Vadier, Amar, and Voulland, from that of Public Safety, in the National Assembly. This measure was premature; it alarmed the friends of the Revolution, and was almost unanimously rejected. But for the strong feeling against the former government which existed in Paris, this defeat might have been fatal to the friends of humanity, and restored the Reign of Terror (3).

Rise of the  
Jeunesse  
dorée. By the advice of Madame de Fontenai, the courageous and eloquent friend of Tallien, the Thermidoriens called to their support the youth of the metropolis; men, at an age when generous feeling is strong, and selfish considerations weak, and whose minds, unwarped by the prejudices or passions of former years, had expanded during the worst horrors of the Revolution. They soon formed a powerful and intrepid body, ever ready to combat the efforts of the Jacobins, and confirm the order which was beginning to prevail. Composed of the most respectable ranks in Paris, they

(1) Toul. v. 232.

(2) Lac. xii. 131, 144, 145. Mig. ii. 351. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 220, 231.

The efforts of the Jacobins to prevent the liberation of the persons confined in prison in the departments, whom they all designated as aristocrats, were very great; but the numerous and heart-rending details of the massacres which were transmitted to the Convention from every part of the country overwhelmed all their opposition. Among the rest, one related by Merlin de Thionville excited particular attention. It was an order signed by a man named Lefèvre, an adjudant-general, addressed to, and executed by, a Captain Macé, to

drown at Paimboeuf forty-one persons; of whom one was an old blind man 76 years of age; twelve women of different ages; twelve girls below 20 years; fifteen children, of whom ten were between 5 and 10 years of age; and five still at the breast. The order was conceived in these terms and rigidly executed. "It is ordered to Peter Macé, captain of the brig Destiny, to put ashore the woman Bidet, and the remainder of the preceding list shall be taken to the heights of Black Peter, and thrown into the sea, as rebels to the law. That operation concluded, he will return to his post."—Hist. de la Conv. iv. 242, 243.

(3) Lac. xii. 132. Mig. ii. 352.

almost all numbered a parent or relation among the victims of the Revolution, and had imbibed with their earliest breath the utmost horror at its sanguinary excesses. To distinguish themselves from the populace, they wore a particular dress, called the *Costume à la Victime*, consisting of a robe without a collar, expressive of their connexion with those who had suffered by the guillotine. Instead of arms, they bore short clubs, loaded with lead, and were known by the name of *la Jeunesse dorée*. They prevailed over the Jacobins at the Palais-Royal, where they had the support of the shopkeepers of that opulent quarter, but were worsted in the gardens of the Tuileries, where the vicinity of the club of their antagonists rendered their influence predominant. Their contests with the democrats were incessant (1); on the streets, in the theatres, in the public walks, they were ever at their post, and contributed by their exertions in a most signal manner to confirm and direct the public mind. In revolutions, the great body of mankind are generally inert and passive; the lead speedily falls into the hands of those who have the boldness to take it.

These contests between the two parties at length assumed the most important character. The whole of Paris became one vast field of battle, in which the friends of humanity, and the supporters of terror, strove for the mastery of the Republic. But public opinion pronounced itself daily more strongly in favour of the Thermidorien party. Billaud-Varennes declared in the Popular Society:—"The lion sleeps, but his wakening will be terrible." This declaration occasioned the greatest agitation in Paris; and the cry was universal to assault the Club of the Jacobins. The National Guard of the Sections supported the troops of the *Jeunesse dorée*, and their combined forces marched against that ancient den of blood. After a short struggle the doors were forced, and the Club dispersed. On the following day they proceeded to lay their complaints before the Convention, but Rewbell, who drew up the report on their complaints, pronounced their doom in the following words:—"Where was the Reign of Terror organized? At the Club of the Jacobins. Where did it find its supporters and satellites? Among the Jacobins. Who are they who have covered France with mourning; peopled its soil with Bastilles; and rendered the Republican yoke so odious, that a slave bent beneath his fetters would refuse to live under it? The Jacobins. Who now regret the hideous yoke from which we have so recently escaped? The Jacobins. If you want courage to pronounce on their fate at this moment you have no longer a Republic, since you have the Jacobins." The Assembly provisionally suspended their sittings; but the Club having resumed their meetings on the following day, 8th Sept. 1794. they were again assailed by the *Troupe dorée*, with the powerful cry, "*Vive la Convention! A bas les Jacobins!*" After an ineffectual struggle, they were finally dispersed, with every mark of ignominy and contempt; and on the following day, the commissioners of the Convention put a seal on their papers, and terminated their existence (2).

Thus fell the Club of the Jacobins, the victim of the crimes it had sanctioned, and the re-action it had produced. Within its walls all the great changes of the Revolution had been prepared, and all its principal scenes rehearsed; from its energy the triumph of the democracy had sprung; and

(1) Lac. xii. 135, 147. Th. vii. 38, 39, 112, 113. Mig. ii. 352, 356, 357.

(2) Lac. xii. 116, 155. Mig. ii. 357, 359. Toul. v. 135, 136. Th. vii. 115, 116, 135, 151, 159, 164.

from its atrocity its destruction arose. A signal proof of the tendency of Revolutionary violence, to precipitate its supporters into crime, and render them at last the victims of the atrocity which they have committed.

**Trial of the Prisoners from Nantes.** Another event, which contributed in the most powerful manner to influence the public mind, was the trial of the prisoners from Nantes, who had been brought up to Paris, under the reign of Robespierre. These captives, who were one hundred and thirty in number, when they left the banks of the Loire, were reduced to ninety-four, by the barbarous treatment they experienced on the road. Their trial was permitted to proceed by the Thermidorien party, in hopes that the detail of the atrocities of the Jacobin leaders, would increase the horror which they had excited in the public mind (1). It proceeded slowly, and the series of cruelties which it developed, exceeded even what the imagination of Dante had figured of the most terrible.

**Their Acquittal, and the Trial of Carrier.** The exposure of these, and similar atrocities, could not fail in increasing the public indignation against the society of the Jacobins, from whose emissaries they had all proceeded. The prisoners were acquitted amidst the acclamations of the people; and the public voice, wrought up to the highest pitch by the recital of these atrocities, loudly demanded the punishment of their authors. Pressed by the force of public opinion, the Convention was obliged to authorize the accusation of Carrier, the head of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes, how unwilling soever they might be to sanction a proceeding which they were conscious might be drawn into an example fatal to many of themselves (2).

**Dreadful Atrocities divulged in its progress.** The trial of this infamous man developed a still more dreadful series of iniquities, and contributed perhaps more than any other circumstance to confirm the inclination of the public mind. One of the witnesses deposed, "That he had obtained a licence to visit a chamber in the prisons where three hundred infants were confined; he found them groaning amidst filth, and shivering of cold; on the following morning he returned, but they were all gone; they had been drowned the preceding night in the Loire." Many thousand persons of both sexes, and all ages, including an extraordinary number of children, perished in this inhuman manner. Carrier did not deny these atrocities, but sought only to justify himself by alleging the orders of the Committee of Public Safety at Paris, and the necessity of making reprisals against the fanatical cruelty of the insurgents of la Vendée. The massacres of the children, of the women, and the noyades of the priests (3), which could not be vindicated on that ground, he alleged he had not commanded; although he could not dispute that he had permitted them, in a district where his authority was unbounded.

**He is Condemned.** After a long trial, this infamous wretch was condemned, and with him another member of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes. The acquittal of the others excited the public indignation so strongly, that the Convention ordered that they should be arrested anew, and the Tribunal which had absolved them abolished (4).

**8th Dec. 1794. Return to Humanity in the Convention.** Yielding to the growing influence of public opinion, which daily pronounced itself more strongly in favour of humane measures, the Convention at length revoked the decree which had expelled the nobles and priests; and Cambacérés, taking advantage of a mo-

(1) Th. vii. 144. Toul. v. 101.

(2) Toul. v. 105, 114. Th. vii. 145, 146.

(3) Toul. v. 129, 130. Th. vii. 169.

(4) Lac. xii. 167, 168.

ment of enthusiasm, proposed a general amnesty for all revolutionary offences other than those declared capital by the criminal code. The proposition was favourably received, and remitted to a committee. On the following day, Tallien proposed the suppression of all the Revolutionary Tribunals (1); the Jacobins vehemently opposed the proposal, and the Assembly, fearful of precipitating matters by too hasty measures, contented themselves for the present with abridging their power.

Public Manners during this Period. The manners of the people during those days of reviving order, exhibited an extraordinary mixture of revolutionary recklessness with the reviving gaiety and elegance of the French character. The captives recently delivered from prison, comprised all the higher classes in Paris, and their habits gave the tone to the general manners of the day. Never was seen a more remarkable union than their circles afforded of grief and joy, of resentment and forgetfulness, of prudence and recklessness, of generous exaltation, and blameable indifference. The first attempt made was to return to elegance, any approach to luxury in the dilapidated state of their fortunes was out of the question. The barbarous retaliation of severity for cruelty, which produced such a frightful reaction in the South of France, was unknown in the metropolis; in the saloons of the Thermidoriens, nothing but the most humane measures were proposed, or the most generous sentiments uttered. Minds subdued by misfortune, and influenced by the approach of death, with religious feeling, breathed, on their first return into the world, much of that benevolent and Christian spirit which had been awakened in many cases for the first time in their minds (2).

The two centres of the Society of Paris were the Faubourg St.-Germain, and the Quarter of the Chaussée-d'Antin; the first comprising the residence of the remains of the nobility, the last of the bankers and merchants who had risen to wealth during the recent troubles. Rigid economy prevailed in the former; the pride of riches, and the passion for newly acquired distinction swayed the latter. At the theatres, at the public assemblies, every thing breathed the recent deliverance from death. No such thunders of applause shook the opera, as when the orchestra struck up the favourite air of the Troupe dorée, called *the Réveil du Peuple*, which successfully combated the revolutionary energy of the Marseillaise hymn. One of the most fashionable

Bals des Victimes.

and brilliant assemblies was called *le Bal des Victimes*, the condition of entrance to which was the loss of a near relation by the guillotine. Between the country dances, they said, "We dance on the tombs;" and a favourite dress for the hair was adopted from the way in which it had been arranged immediately before execution. The almanacks most in request were called "Les Almanachs des prisons," in which the sublime resignation and courage of many of the captives were mingled with the ribaldry and indecency with which others had endeavoured to dispel the gloom of that sombre abode. But the Christian virtue of charity was never more eminently conspicuous than among those who, recently delivered themselves from death, knew how to appreciate the sufferings of their fellow-creatures (3).

Gradual Abolition of the Revolutionary Measures.

Meanwhile the Convention gradually undid the laws which had passed during the Revolutionary government. The law of the maximum of prices, which had been introduced to favour the

(1) Toul. v. 143.

(2) Lac. xii. 172, 173. Th. vii. 218, 223.

(3) Lac. xii. 174, 176. Mig. ii. 356.

tumultuous inhabitants of towns, at the expense of the industrious labourers of the country; the prohibitions against Christian worship; the statutes confiscating the property of the Gironde party, condemned by the Committees, were successively repealed. This was followed by a general measure, restoring to the families of all persons condemned since the Revolution, their property, so far as it had not been disposed of to others. The Abbé Morellet published an eloquent appeal to the public, entitled, *le Cri des Familles*, and Legendre concluded a powerful speech in their favour with these touching

Amnesty to  
Children of  
those Executed  
during the Re-  
volution.

words:—"If I possessed one acre belonging to these unfortunate sufferers, never could I taste of repose. In the evening, while walking in my solitary garden, I would fancy I beheld in each rosebud, the tears of an orphan whom I had robbed of its inheritance."

The bust of Marat was soon after broken at the Theatre Feydeau, by a band of the Troupe dorée, and next day destroyed in all the public places. His body, which had been buried with extraordinary pomp in the Panthéon, was taken out and thrown into a common sewer. About the same time, the survivors of the twenty-two proscribed members of the Girondist party, who had been in concealment since the revolt of the 31st May, were restored to their seats in the Assembly; and the Thermidorien party saw itself strengthened by the accession of Louvet, Isnard, Lanjuinais, Henri Larivière, and others, alike estimable for their talents, and their constancy under adverse fortune(1).

Impeach-  
ment of  
Billaud-Va-  
rennes and  
the Jacobin  
Leaders.

Strengthened by the accession of so many new members, and the increasing force of public opinion, Tallien and his friends proceeded to the decisive measure, of impeaching Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, Barrère, and Vadier, the remaining heads of the Jacobins. "You demand the Restoration of Terror," said Tallien: "Let us consider the means it employs before we estimate its effects. A government can never inspire terror but by menacing with capital punishments: by menacing without intermission, without distinction, without investigation, all who oppose it: by menacing without proof, on mere suspicion, on no ground at all; by striking continually with relentless hand, in order to inspire terror into all the world. You must suspend over every action a punishment, over every word a threat, over silence even a suspicion: you must place under every step a snare, in every family a traitor, in every tribunal an assassin: you must put every citizen to the torture, by the punishment of multitudes, and subsequent massacre of the executioners, lest they should become too powerful. Such is the system of governing by terror: does it belong to a free, humane, and regular government, or to the worst species of tyranny?" These eloquent words produced a great impression (2): the opposition against the Jacobins became so powerful, both within and without the assembly, that a return to severe measures was impossible, and the government was swept along by the universal passion for a humane administration.

March 1795. This bold step, however, excited the most violent tumults among the democratic party. Several causes at that period contributed to inflame the public discontent. The winter, which had set in with uncommon severity, exposed many of the lower classes to suffering; a scarcity of provisions was, as usual, ascribed by the multitude to the conduct of government, and

(1) Mig. ii. 361, 363. Lac. xii. 177—179. Th. vii. 229, 230, Hist. de la Conv. iv. 237, 246.

(2) Hist. de la Conv. iv. 231.

the dreadful depreciation of the assignats, threatened almost every individual in the kingdom with ruin. Instruments of this dangerous description to the amount of above eight milliards of francs, or L.400,000,000 sterling, had been put into circulation by the Revolutionary government, and although their influence had been prodigious at the moment in sustaining the credit of the state, yet their nominal value soon gave way from the distrust of government, and the immense quantity of confiscated property which was at the same time brought to sale, and they had now fallen to one-fifteenth of the sum for which they were issued. "The worst rebellions," says Lord Bacon, "are those which proceed from the stomach;" and of this truth Paris soon furnished an example. The Jacobin leaders, threatened with accusations, used their utmost exertions to rouse the populace, and the discontent arising from so much suffering, made them lend a willing ear to their seditious harangues (1).

Carnot was not included in the Act of Accusation; but he had the magnanimity to declare, that, having acted with his colleagues for the public good, he had no wish but to share their fate. This generous proceeding embarrassed the accusers; but, in order to avoid implicating so illustrious a character in the impeachment, it was resolved to limit it to some only of the members of the Committee, and Amar, Voulland, and the painter David, were excluded, the last of whom had disgraced a fine genius by the most savage revolutionary fanaticism (2).

1st April,  
1795.  
Revolt of  
the Popu-  
lace.

On the 1st April, a revolt was organized in the Faubourgs, to prevent the trial of Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, Barrère, and Vadier, which was about to commence two days after. The cry of the insurgents was bread, and the constitution of 1793, and the freedom of the patriots in confinement. The universal suffering which had followed the democratic rule, afforded the Jacobins too powerful a lever to move the passions of the people. "Since France had become Republican," says the graphic annalist, himself a member of the Convention, and supporter of Robespierre, "every species of evil had accumulated upon its devoted head. Famine, a total cessation of commerce, civil war, attended by its usual accompaniments, conflagration, robbery, pillage, and murder: justice was interrupted, the sword of the law wielded by iniquity: property spoliated, confiscation rendered the order of the day, the scaffold permanently erected, calumnious denunciations held in the highest estimation. Nothing was wanting to the general desolation: virtue, merit of every sort were persecuted with unrelenting severity: debauchery encouraged, arbitrary arrests universally established, the Revolutionary armies ploughing through the state like a devouring flame, hatred everywhere fomented, hatred and disunion brought into the bosom of domestic families. Never had a country descended so low: never had a people been overwhelmed by a similar chaos of crimes and abominations (3)." Instigated by such sufferings, a formidable band soon surrounded the Assembly. Speedily they forced their way in; drunken women, abandoned prostitutes formed the revolting advanced guard: but speedily a more formidable band of petitioners, with pikes in their hands, filled every vacant space. Having penetrated to the bar, they commenced the most seditious harangues: and ascending the benches of the members, seated themselves with the deputies of

(1) Mig. ii. 364, 365. Lac. x. 174—191. Th. vii. 249, 250. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 232.

(2) Lac. xii. 194.

(3) Hist. de la Conv. ii. 215, 216.

the Mountain. Every thing announced the approach of a crisis; the Jacobins were recovering their former audacity, and the majority of the Assembly labouring under severe apprehension, were on the point of withdrawing, when, fortunately, a large body of the *Troupe dorée*, who had assembled at the sound of the tocsin, entered the hall, under the command of Pichegru, chanting in loud strains the "*Réveil du Peuple*." The insurgents knew their masters; and that formidable body, before whom the strength of the monarchy had so often trembled, yielded to the courage of a few thousand undisciplined young men. The crowd lately so clamorous, gradually withdrew from the bar, and, in a short time, the accused members were left alone to the vengeance of the Assembly, to answer for a revolt, which they had so evidently excited (1).

Humanity of the Thermidoriens after their Victory. The Thermidoriens made a humane use of their victory. They were fearful of making too large chasms in the ranks of the allies, by whose assistance they had so recently been delivered from the tyranny of Robespierre; and they justly feared a reaction in the public mind, if they put themselves in practice on their first triumph, the bloody maxims which they had so severely condemned in their adversaries. By a concert with the leaders of the Girondists, Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, and Barrère, were condemned to the limited punishment of transportation; and seventeen members of the Mountain, who had seemed most favourable to the revolt (2), were put under arrest, and the next day conducted to the *Chateau of Ham*. The persons thus put in confinement, comprised Combon, Ruamps, Thuriot, Amar, and the whole strength of the Jacobin party.

Condemned Prisoners are Transported to Ham. The transference of the condemned deputies to the *Chateau of Ham* was not accomplished without some difficulty. They were once rescued by the insurgent populace; but Pichegru having arrived at the head of three hundred of the *Troupe dorée*, the mob was dispersed, and the prisoners again seized and conducted to the place of their confinement. Nothing is more instructive in the history of the French Revolution, than the important consequences which, in all its stages, attended the efforts even of the smallest body, acting energetically in the cause of order (3).

And thence to Cayenne. The fate of these revolutionary leaders was commensurate to their crimes in the colony to which they were conveyed. Their lives, which were in the first instance threatened by the burning climate of Cayenne, were saved by the generous kindness of the sisters of charity, who, in the hospital on that distant shore, continued to practise, towards the most depraved of mankind, the sublime principles of forgiveness of injuries. Collot-d'Herbois shortly after his recovery, endeavoured to engage the slaves of the colony in a revolt; being defeated in the attempt, he was confined in the Fort of Sinnamari, where he died, of a bottle of spirits which he swallowed in a moment of despair (4). Billaud-Varennes survived long the other companions of his exile; his hardened mind prevented him from feeling the pangs of remorse, and his favourite occupation was teaching a parrot which he had tamed, the jargon and the indecencies of the revolutionary language. Barrère had nearly died shortly after his banishment, of a loathsome malady which he had contracted at Rochefort; but he survived both that disease and

(1) Lac. xii. 198. Mig. ii. 365. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 295—305.

(2) Mig. ii. 367. Th. vii. 290—300. Lac. xii. 198, 199.

(3) Lac. xii. 200. Toul. v. 213/

(4) Lac. xii. 201.

the burning climate of Sinnamari, and was restored to France by Napoleon in 1800; and before the expiry of his exile, Billaud-Varennes beheld the arrival, in the hut next his own, of the illustrious Pichegru, whose vigour had been so instrumental in conducting him into exile (1).

Renewed  
efforts of  
the Jacobins.

The Jacobins were broken, but not subdued. By the fall of Robespierre, and the execution of his associates in the Municipality, they had lost the Commune; the closing of their place of debates had deprived them of their centre of operations; by the exile of so many members of the Assembly, they were bereaved of their ablest leaders. Still there remained to them the forces of the Faubourgs; the inhabitants of which retained their arms which they had received in an early period of the revolutionary troubles; while their needy circumstances, and exasperation at the high price of provisions, rendered them ready for the most desperate enterprises. The failure of their revolt on 1st April did not discourage their leaders; they saw in it only a proof of the necessity of making a greater effort with more formidable forces. A general insurrection of the Faubourgs was agreed on for the 20th May; above thirty thousand men, armed with pikes, were then to march against the Convention, a greater force than that which had proved victorious on many former occasions, and never before had they been animated by so ferocious a spirit. Their rallying cry was, "Bread, and the Constitution 1793 (2).

19th May. The succeeding night (19th May) was one of the most frightful which occurred during the whole course of the Revolution. From sunset Paris was the theatre of unceasing perturbation: seditious groups were formed on the quays, in the squares, on the boulevards: a crowd of noisy discontented persons traversed every quarter, calling on the discontented, the famishing, the desperate to revolt: bands of women went from door to door, knocking aloud, raising alarming cries in the streets, and deploring the death of the *good Robespierre*, whom the aristocrats had put to death, and calling on the people to rise against their oppressors, march straight to the Tuileries and instal the true Republicans in power. The générale and the tocsin sounded at the same time: to their incessant clang were soon joined hideous cries, fierce vociferations, mingled with the occasional discharge of muskets and pistols: while the cannon of Government sounded at intervals: and the deep bell, placed lately on the summit of the Great-Pavilion of the Tuileries, by its loud and measured toll called the National Guard to the defence of the Convention (3).

Hesitation appeared on the following morning of order: the Jacobins were already in arms; immense assemblages appeared round the Panthéon, in the place of the Bastille, in that of Notre-Dame, in the Place de Grève, in the Place Royal. The whole city was in agitation: vast bodies of insurgents by day break surrounded the Assembly, and by ten o'clock every avenue to it was choked with a forest of pikes (4).

(1) Lac. xii. 202.

Barrère was employed in obscure situations by Napoleon, and was alive at Brussels, where he was living in great poverty, in 1831. It was one of his favourite positions at that time, "that the world could never be civilized, till the punishment of death was utterly abolished, and that no human being had a right to take away the life of another." This was the man who said in 1793, "the Tree of Liberty cannot flourish if it is not watered by the blood of a king; and il n'y a que les morts qui ne

reviennent pas." So completely does a Revolution unshingle the human mind, that no reliance can be placed in its vicissitudes, on anything but the state of duty which religion inspires. Before the Revolution he was the Marquis de Viteuse with an ample fortune.—See Sir Arthur Brooke Faulkner's Travels in Germany, i. 260—268.

(2) Lac. xii. 218. Th. vii. 381, 382. M<sup>g</sup>. ii. 381.

(3) Hist. de la Conv. iv. 310, 311.

(4) Hist. de la Conv. iv. 311, 312.



The insurgents had adopted the most energetic measures to restore the democratic order of things. In the name of the "Insurgent people who had risen to obtain bread, and resume their rights," they established a provisional committee, which immediately abolished the revolutionary government, proclaimed the democratic Constitution of 1793; the dismissal of the members of administration, and their arrest; the liberation of the patriots in confinement; the immediate convocation of the primary assemblies; the suspension of all authority not emanating from the people. They resolved to create a new Municipality to serve as a centre of operations, to seize the telegraph, the barriers, the cannon of alarm, and the tocsin; and to invite all the forces, both regular and irregular, to join the banners of the people, and march against the Assembly (1).

Excessive Misery at Paris. The misery at Paris at this time, in consequence of the famine which the Reign of Terror had brought upon France, and the general failure of agricultural exertion, in consequence of the forced requisitions and the law of the *Maximum*, had now risen to the very highest pitch. A contemporary republican writer gives the following energetic picture of the public suffering:—"The Convention had lost all its popularity, because it had evinced so little disposition to relieve the sufferings of the people, which had now become absolutely intolerable. The anarchists, the enemies of order, profited by this ferment, and did their utmost to augment it, because that class reap no harvest but in the fields of misery. France, exhausted by every species of suffering, had lost even the power of uttering a complaint, and we had all arrived at such a point of depression, that death, if unattended by pain, would have been wished for even by the youngest human being, because it offered the prospect of repose, and every one panted for that blessing at any price. But it was ordained that many days, months, and years should still continue in that state of horrible agitation, the true foretaste of the torments of Hell (2)."

Great Insurrection in May. The mobs which had, for some weeks preceding, assembled in the streets on account of the high price of provisions and universal suffering, prevented the Convention from being aware of the approach of a great popular movement, or of the magnitude of the danger which threatened them. No sooner, however, were they informed of it, on the morning of the revolt, by the Committees of Government, than they took the most prompt measures to maintain their authority. They instantly declared their sittings permanent, voted all assemblages of the people seditious, named commanders of the armed force, and summoned the National Guard of the Sections by the sound of the tocsin to their defence. But these measures promised only tardy relief, while the danger was instant and imminent. Scarcely were the decrees of the Convention passed, when a furious multitude broke into the hall, crying aloud for bread and the Constitution of 1793. The President Vernier behaved with a dignity befitting his situation, "Your cries," he said, "will not alter one iota of our measures; they will not hasten by one second the arrival of provisions, they will only retard them." A violent tumult drowned his voice; the insurgents broke open the inner doors with hatchets, and instantly a vociferous multitude filled the whole of the room. A severe struggle ensued between the National Guard, intrusted with the defence of the Assembly, and the furious rabble. Vernier

(1) Mig. ii. 368, 369. Th. vii. 364.

(2) Duchess d'Ab, i. 296.

Convention  
Besieged.  
Heroic con-  
duct of  
Boissy-  
d'Anglas.

was torn from the chair, it was immediately occupied by Boissy-d'Anglas, who, through the whole of that perilous day, evinced the most heroic firmness of mind. Féraud, with generous devotion, interposed his body to receive the blows destined for the president; he was mortally wounded, dragged out by the populace, and beheaded in the lobby. They instantly placed his head on a pike, and with savage cries re-entered the hall, bearing aloft in triumph the bloody trophy of their violence. Almost all the deputies fled in consternation; none remained excepting the friends of the revolt; and Boissy-d'Anglas, who, with Roman constancy, filled the chair, and regardless of all the threats of the multitude, unceasingly protested, in the name of the Convention, against the violence with which they were assailed. They presented to him the lifeless head of Féraud; he turned aside with emotion from the horrid spectacle; they again presented it, and he bowed with reverence before the remains of fidelity and devotion. He was at length torn from his chair by the efforts of his friends, and the insurgents, overawed by the grandeur of his conduct, permitted him to retire without molestation. The annals of Rome afford nothing more sublime (1).

They obtain  
the Mastery  
of the Le-  
gislation;

Being now undisputed masters of the Convention, the insurgents, with the aid of their associates in the Assembly, proceeded without delay to assume the government. Amidst the gloom of twilight, they named a president, got possession of all the bureaux, and in the midst of deafening applause, passed a series of resolutions declaratory of their intentions. The most important of these were, the restoration of the Jacobin club, the re-establishment of the democratic constitution, the recall of the exiled members, the dismissal of the existing members of the government. A provisional government, and a commander of the armed force, were named, and every thing seemed to indicate a complete revolution (2).

But are at  
length  
Defeated by  
the Com-  
mittees and  
the Troupe  
dorée.

But though the Assembly was dissolved, the Committees still existed, and their firmness saved France. All the efforts of the insurgents to force their place of meeting were defeated by the vigour of a few companies of National Guard, and a determined band of the Troupe dorée, who guarded the avenues to that last asylum of order and humanity. As night approached many of the mob retired to their homes, and the forces of the Sections began to assemble in strength round the Committees. Encouraged by the strength of their defenders, they even returned to the seat of government, and there ventured on an open attack on the insurgents: the Sections advanced with fixed bayonets, the pikemen of the Faubourgs stood their ground, and a bloody strife ensued in the hall and on the benches of the Convention. The opposing cries, *Vive les Jacobins! Vive la Convention!* resounded from the opposite sides of the room, and success was for a few minutes doubtful. At length the Insurgents were forced back, and a frightful mass of men and women, half of whom were intoxicated, were forced out of the Hall. At eleven o'clock Legendre made a sally, and speedily routed the surrounding multitude; they made a resistance as pusillanimous as their conduct had been violent; and the members who had fled, resumed at midnight their places in the Convention. All that had been done by the rebel authority was immediately annulled; eight-and-twenty members who

(1) Mig. ii. 370. Lac. xii. 221, 223. Th. vii. 386, 391. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 320, 331.

(2) Mig. ii. 370. Lac. xii. 223. Th. vii. 392-394. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 336, 337.

had supported their proceedings, were put under arrest, and at five in the morning they were already five leagues from Paris (1).

Such was the termination of this memorable revolt, which obtained the name of the insurrection of the 1st Prairial. On no former occasion had the people evinced such exasperation, or a spectacle so terrible been exhibited in the legislature. If cannon were not planted in battery against the Convention, as on the 31st May, yet the scenes in the interior of its hall were more bloody and appalling; and the victory of the populace for the time not less complete. The want of design and decision on the part of the insurgents alone made them lose the victory after they had gained it, and saved France from a return to the Reign of Blood (2).

But the Faubourgs, though defeated, were not subdued. On the following day they advanced in still greater force against the Convention, and had already pointed their cannon against the place of their deliberation. The conduct of the President Legendre on this trying occasion was in the highest degree admirable. The sound of the approach of the cannon made several members start from their seats, and run towards the door. "Representatives!" cried he, "remain at your posts; be steady. Nature has destined us all to death; a little sooner or later is of little moment; but an instant's vacillation would ruin you for ever." Awed by these words, they resumed their seats, and awaited in silence the enemies who surrounded the hall. Their defenders, however, soon arrived; the Jeunesse dorée appeared in strength: arms were distributed to thirty thousand men: the cavalry appeared in imposing numbers; the Sections Lepelletier, and of la Butte-des-Moulins, ranged themselves round the Convention; cannon were planted, and platoons ready to discharge on both sides. Intimidated by a resistance they had not expected, the chiefs of the insurgents paused; and the Assembly, taking advantage of their hesitation, entered into a negotiation with their leaders, who prevailed on the people to retire, after receiving the assurance that the supply of provisions for the capital should be attended to, and the laws of the Constitution 1793 enforced. The result of that day demonstrated, that the physical force of the populace, however formidable, being deprived of the guidance of leaders of ability, could not contend with the permanent influence of the government (3).

Trial and  
Condemna-  
tion of  
Romme and  
the Jacobin  
remnant.

Instructed by so many disasters, and such narrow escapes from utter ruin, the Convention resolved on the most decisive measures. Six of the most obnoxious Members of the Mountain were delivered over to a military commission, by whom they were condemned.

Three of them, Romme, Goujon, and Du Quesnoy, stabbed themselves at the 17th June. bar on receiving sentence, and expired in presence of the judges; the other three were only mortally wounded, and were led, still bleeding, to the scaffold. They all died with a stoical firmness, so often displayed during those days of anarchy, the victims of political, worse than any religious fanaticism (4).

Condemna-  
tion of  
Féraud's  
Murderer.

At length the period was arrived when the Faubourgs, whose revolts had so often proved fatal to the tranquillity of France, were to be finally subdued. The murderer of the deputy Féraud had been discovered, and condemned by a military commission. When the day

(1) Mig. ii. 371. Lac. xii. 223. Th. vii. 395.  
399. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 339, 344.

(3) Mig. ii. 372. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 349, 350.

(4) Lac. xii. 230. Mig. ii. 373. Th. vii. 407.

(2) Th. vii. 402. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 343, 344. 408. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 351.

of his punishment approached, the Convention, to prevent another revolt, ordered the disarming of the Faubourgs. A band of the most intrepid of the Troupe dorée, imprudently advanced into that thickly peopled quarter; and after seizing some arms, found themselves surrounded by its immense population. They owed their safety to the humanity or prudence of the leaders of the revolt, who hesitated to imbrue their hands in the blood of the best families of Paris. But no sooner were they permitted to retire, than the National Guard, thirty thousand strong, supported by four thousand troops of the line, surrounded the revolutionary quarter; the avenues leading to it were planted with cannon, and mortars disposed on conspicuous situations to terrify them into submission. Alarmed at the prospect of a bombardment, by which their property would have been endangered, the master manufacturers, and chiefs of the revolt, had a conference, at which it was resolved to make an unconditional surrender. They submitted without limitation to the terms of the Assembly; their cannon were taken from them, the cannoneers disbanded; the Revolutionary Committees suppressed; the Constitution of 1793 abolished; and the formidable pikes, which since the 14th July, 1793, had so often struck terror into Paris, finally given up. Shortly after the military force was taken from the populace. The National Guards were organized on a new footing; the workmen, the valets, the indigent citizens, were excluded from its ranks; and its new members, regularly organized by battalions and brigades, were subjected to the orders of the Military Committee. At the same time, in accordance to an earnest petition from the few remaining Catholics, they were permitted to make use of the churches, on condition of maintaining them at their own expense (1).

Thus terminated the Reign of the Multitude, six years after it had been first established, by the storming of the Bastille. From the period of their being disarmed, the populace took no farther share in the changes of government; they were brought about solely by the middling classes and the army. The Revolution, considered as a movement of the people, was thereafter at an end; the subsequent struggles were merely the contests of other powers for the throne which they had made vacant.

The gradual relaxation of the extraordinary rigour of government erected by the Convention, presents an interesting epoch in the history of the Revolution.

After the overthrow of Robespierre, the Convention endeavoured to retrace their steps towards the natural order of society; but they experienced the utmost difficulty in the attempt. To go on with the *maximum*, forced requisitions, and general distribution of food, was impossible; but how to relax these extreme measures was the question, when the general industry of the country was so grievously reduced, and the usual supplies so much straitened, both by the abstraction of agricultural labourers, the terror of the requisitions, and the forced sales at a nominal and ruinous price. The first step towards a return to the natural state was an augmentation of the price fixed as a *maximum* by two-thirds, and a limitation of the right of making forced requisitions. But these oppressive

(1) Mig. ii. 373. Th. vii. 410, 420. Lac. xii. 227. Toul. v. 260, 261. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 351, 352.

exactions were in fact abandoned by the reaction in the public feeling, and the cessation of terror, after the fall of the Dictatorial government. The assignats going on continually declining, the aversion of all the industrial classes to the *maximum* was constantly increasing, because the losses they sustained, through the forced sales, were thereby daily augmented; and the persons intrusted with the administration of the laws, being of a more moderate and humane cast, were averse to have recourse to the sanguinary measures which were still placed at their disposal. Thus there was everywhere in France a general endeavour to elude the *maximum*, and the newly constituted authorities winked at frauds which they felt to be the necessary consequence of so unjust a law. No one, during the Reign of Terror, ventured openly to resist regulations, which rendered the industrial and commercial classes tributary to the soldiers and the multitude; but when the danger of the guillotine was at an end, the reaction against it was irresistible (1).

Reaction against the violent measures of the Reign of Terror. Many months had not elapsed after the 9th Thermidor, before the total abolition of the *maximum* and forced requisitions was demanded in the Assembly. Public feeling revolted against their continuance, and they were abolished almost by acclamation. The powers of the Commission of Subsistence and Provisions were greatly circumscribed; the right of making forced requisitions continued only for a month, and its army of ten thousand employes restricted to a few hundred. At the same time, the free circulation of gold and silver, which had been arrested by the Revolutionary Government, was again permitted (2).

The inextricable question of the assignats next occupied the attention of the Assembly; for the suffering produced by their depreciation had become absolutely intolerable to a large portion of the people. Being still a legal tender at par, all those who had money to receive lost eleven-twelfths of their property. The salaries of the public functionaries, and the payments to the public creditors, were to a certain degree augmented, but by no means in proportion to the depreciation of the paper. But this was a trifling remedy; the great evil still remained unmitigated in all payments between man and man over the whole country (3).

Inextricable difficulty in contracting the Assignats. The only way of withdrawing the assignats from circulation, and in consequence enhancing their value, was by the sale of the national domains, when, according to the theory of their formation, they should be retired by Government and destroyed. But how were purchasers to be found? That was the eternal question which constantly recurred, and never could be answered. The same national convulsion which had confiscated two-thirds of the land of France belonging to the emigrants, the clergy, and the crown domains, had destroyed almost all the capital which could be employed in its purchase. Sales to any considerable extent were thus totally out of the question, the more especially as the estates thus brought all at once to sale, consisted in great part of sumptuous palaces, woods, parks, and other domains, in circumstances, of all others, the worst adapted for a division among the industrial classes. It was not a few capitals of shopkeepers and farmers which had escaped the general wreck, that could produce any impression on such immense possessions. The difficulty, in truth, was inextricable; no sales to any extent went on; the assignats were continually

(1) Mig. ii. 402. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 257, 258.  
Th. vii. 66, 139, 224, 225.

(2) Th. vii. 236, 238.  
(3) Ibid. vii. 240.

increasing with the vast expenditure of Government, and at length it was got over, as will appear in the sequel, by forced means, and the proclamation of a national bankruptcy of the very worst kind (1).

Dreadful  
scarcity in  
Paris from  
the abolition  
of the  
forced Re-  
quisitions.

But the attention of the Convention was soon drawn to evils of a still more pressing kind. The abolition of the *maximum* and of the forced requisitions, had deprived government of its violent means of feeding the citizens, while, in consequence of the shock which these tyrannical proceedings had given to industry, the usual sources of supply were almost dried up. The consequence was a most severe scarcity of every kind of provisions, which went on increasing during the whole of the winter of 1794-5, and, at length, in March 1795, reached the most alarming height. To the natural evils of famine were superadded the horrors of a winter of uncommon severity, such as had not been experienced in Europe for a hundred years. The roads, covered with ice, were impassable for carriages; the canals were frozen up; and the means of subsistence to the metropolis seemed to be totally exhausted. In this extremity every family endeavoured to lay in stores for a few days, and the few convoys which approached Paris were besieged by crowds of famishing citizens, who proceeded twenty and thirty miles to anticipate the ordinary supplies. Nothing remained but for government, who still adhered, though with weakened powers, to the system of distributing food to the people, to diminish the rations daily issued out; and on the report of Boissy-d'Anglas, the quantity served out from the public magazines was diminished to one-half, or a pound of bread a-day for each person above the working classes, and a pound and a-half to those actually engaged in labour. At this rate, there was distributed to the 636,000 inhabitants of the capital, eighteen hundred and ninety seven sacks of flour. But small as this quantity was, it was soon found necessary to reduce it still farther; and at length, for several weeks, each citizen received only *two ounces* of black and coarse bread a-day. Small as this pittance was, it could be obtained only by obtaining tickets from the committees of Government, and after waiting at the doors of the bakers from eleven at night till seven in the morning, during the rigour of an arctic winter. The citizens of Paris were for months reduced to the horrors of a besieged town; numbers perished of famine, and many owed their existence to the kindness of some friend in the country, and the introduction of the potato (2), which already began to assuage this artificial, as it has so often since done the most severe natural scarcities.

Miserable  
fare and suf-  
ferings of  
the People.

Enormous  
depreciation  
in the value  
of the As-  
signats.

The abolition of the *maximum*, of the requisitions, and of all the forced methods of procuring supplies, produced, as might have been anticipated, a most violent reaction on the price of every article of consumption, and, by consequence, on the value of the assignats. Foreign commerce having begun to revive with the cessation of the Reign of Terror, sales being no longer forced, the assignat was brought into comparison with the currency of other countries, and its enormous inferiority precipitated still further its fall. The rapidity of its decline gave rise to numerous speculations on the exchange of Paris; and the people, in the midst of the horrors of famine, were exasperated by the sight of fortunes made out of the misery which they endured. Government, to provide for the necessities of the inhabitants, had no other resource but to increase the issue of assignats

(1) Th. vii. 241, 242. Mig. ii. 403.

(2) Th. vii. 246, 252. Lac. xii. 191, 193.

for the purchase of provisions; three milliards more were issued for this necessary purpose, and the consequence was, that the paper money fell almost to nothing. Bread was exposed for sale at twenty-two francs the pound, and what formerly cost 100 francs, was now raised to 4000. In the course of the year the depreciation became such, that 28,000 francs in paper were exchanged for a louis d'or, and a dinner for five or six persons cost 60,000 francs. A kind of despair seized every mind at such prodigious and apparently interminable losses, and it was the force of this feeling which produced the great revolts already mentioned, which had so nearly proved fatal to the Thermidoriens, and restored the whole forced system of the Reign of Terror (1).

June and  
July 1795.

The overthrow of this insurrection led to several laws which powerfully tended to diminish the destructive ascendancy of the people in the government. The National Guards were reorganized on the footing on which they had been before the 10th August; the labouring and poorer classes excluded, and the service confined to the more substantial citizens. At Paris this important force was placed under the orders of the military committee. The Government got quit at the same time of a burdensome and ruinous custom, which the Convention had borrowed from the Athenian Democracy, of allowing every indigent citizen fifty sous a-day, while they were engaged at their respective Sections; a direct premium on idleness, and a constant inducement to the turbulent and restless to assemble at these great centres of democratic power. The churches were restored to the anxious wishes of the Catholics, on the condition that they should maintain them themselves; the first symptom of a return to religious feeling in that infidel age (2).

Vain Measures of the Government to arrest the evil.

All the evils, the necessary result of an excessive and forced paper circulation, went on increasing after the Government had returned to moderate measures, were installed in power. Subsistence was constantly wanting in the great towns; the treasury was empty of all but assignats; the great bulk of the national domains remained unsold; the transactions, debts, and properties of individuals were involved in inextricable confusion. Sensible of the necessity of doing something for those who were paid in the government paper, the Directory adopted a scale by which the assignats were taken as worth a fifth of their nominal value; but this was an inconsiderable relief, as they had fallen to a *hundred-and-fiftieth* part of the sum for which they had been originally issued. The consequence of this excessive depreciation in a paper which was still a legal tender, was, that the whole debts of individuals were extinguished by a payment worth nothing; that the income of the fundholders was annihilated; and the State itself, compelled to receive its own paper in payment of the taxes, found the treasury filled with a mass of sterile assignats. But for the half of the land-tax, which was received in kind, the government would have been literally without the means either of feeding Paris or the armies (3).

Hitherto the reaction had been in favour of constitutional and moderate measures; but the last great victory over the Jacobins revived the hopes of the Royalists. The emigrants and the clergy had returned in great numbers since the repeal of the severe laws passed against them during the Reign of

(1) Th. vii. 376, 381. Lac. xiii. 40.  
(2) Th. vii. 419, 420. Lac. xiii. 43.

(3) Th. viii. 85, 86. Lac. xiii. 32.

**Terror, and contributed powerfully to incline the public mind to a moderate and constitutional monarchy.** The horror excited by the sanguinary proceedings of the Jacobins was so strong and universal, that the reaction naturally was in favour of a Royalist Government. The recent successes of the *Troupe dorée*, who formed the flower of the youth of Paris, had awakened in them a strong *esprit de corps*, and prepared the great and inert body of the people to follow a banner which had so uniformly led to victory (1).

So strong was the feeling at that period from recent and grievous experience of the dangers of popular tumults, that after the disarming of the *Faubourgs*, several sections made a voluntary surrender of their artillery to the government. A large body of troops of the line were brought to Paris, and encamped in the Plain of Sablons; and the galleries of the Assembly were closed except to persons having tickets of admission. The language of the deputations of the Sections at the bar of the Convention became openly hostile to the dominion of the people, and such as would a few months earlier have been a sure passport to the scaffold. "Experience," said the deputies of the Section *Lepelletier*, "has taught us that the despotism of the people is as insupportable as the tyranny of kings." The Revolutionary Tribunal, at the same period, was abolished by a decree of the Convention. A journal of the day observed, "Such was the tranquil and bloodless end of the most atrocious institution, of which, since the Council of Blood established by the Duke of Alva in the Low Countries, the history of tribunals, instruments of injustice, has preserved the remembrance (2)."

During this revolution of public opinion, the Convention were engaged in the formation of a constitution. It is in the highest degree both curious and instructive to contemplate the altered doctrines which prevailed after the consequences of popular government had been experienced, and how generally men reverted to those principles which, in the commencement of the Revolution, were stigmatized as slavish and disgraceful. *Boissy d'Anglas* was chosen to make a report upon the form of the Constitution; his memoir contains much important truth, which preceding events had forced upon the observation of mankind. "Hitherto," said he, "the efforts of France have been solely directed to destroy; at present, when we are neither silenced by the oppression of tyrants, nor intimidated by the cries of demagogues, we must turn to our advantage the crimes of the Monarchy, the errors of the Assembly, the horrors of the Decemviral tyranny, the calamities of anarchy. Absolute equality is a chimera; virtue, talents, physical or intellectual powers, are not equally distributed by Nature. Property alone attaches the citizen to his country; all who are to have any share in the legislature should be possessed of some independent income. All Frenchmen are citizens; but the state of domestic service, pauperism, or the non-payment of taxes, forbid the great majority from exercising their rights. The Executive Government requires a central position, a disposable force, a display calculated to strike the vulgar. The people should never be permitted to deliberate indiscriminately on public affairs; a populace constantly deliberating rapidly perishes by misery and disorder; the laws should never be submitted to the consideration of the multitude." Such were the

(1) *Mig.* ii. 381. *Th.* viii. 1, 9.

(2) *Toul.* v. 263, 270. *Th.* viii. 20, 21.



principles ultimately adopted by the Revolutionary Assembly of France. In a few years, centuries of experience had been acquired (1).

General abandonment of Democratic principles from the force of experience. If such was the language of the Convention, it may easily be conceived how much more powerful was the reaction among the middling classes of the people. The National Guard, and the *Jeunesse dorée* of several Sections, were become openly Royalists; they wore the green and black uniform which distinguished the Chouans of the western provinces; the Réveil du Peuple was beginning to awaken the dormant, not extinguished, loyalty of the French character. The name of *Terrorist* had become the signal for proscriptions as perilous in many places as that of *Aristocrat* had formerly been.

In the south, especially, the reaction was terrible. Bands, bearing the names of the "Companies of Jesus," and the "Companies of the Sun," traversed the country, executing the most dreadful reprisals upon the revolutionary party. At Lyon, Aix, Tarascon, and Marseille, they massacred the prisoners without either trial or discrimination; the 2d of September was renewed with all its horrors in most of the prisons of the south of France. At Lyon, after the first massacre of the Terrorists, they pursued the wretches through the streets, and when any one was seized, he was instantly thrown into the Rhone; at Tarascon, the captives were cast headlong from the top of a lofty rock into that rapid stream. One prison at Lyon was set on fire by the infuriated mob, and the unhappy inmates all perished in the flames. The

Violent reaction in the South of France.

people, exasperated with the blood which had been shed by the revolutionary party, were insatiable in their vengeance; they invoked the name of a parent, brother, or sister, when retaliating on their oppressors; and while committing murder themselves, exclaimed, with every stroke, "Die assassins!" History must equally condemn such horrors by whomsoever committed; but it must reserve its severest censure for those by whom they were first perpetrated (2).

Many innocent persons perished, as in all popular tumults, during those bloody days. The two sons of the Duke of Orléans, the Duke de Montpensier, and the Count Beaujolais, were confined in the fort of St.-Jean at Marseille, where they had been forgot during the Reign of Terror. On the 6th June, a terrible noise round the fort announced the approach of the frantic multitude.

Generous conduct of the young Duke of Orléans' sons.

The cries of the victims in the adjoining cells too soon informed them of the danger which they ran; Royalists and Jacobins were indiscriminately massacred by the bloody assassins. Isnard and Cardroi at length put a stop to the massacres, but not before eighty persons had been murdered. The former, though he strove to moderate the savage measures of the Royalists, increased their fury by the fearful energy of his language. "We want arms," said the young men who were marching against the Jacobins of Toulon. "Take," said he, "the bones of your fathers to march against their murderers (3)."

The fate of these young Princes was in the highest degree interesting. Some months afterwards, they formed a plan of escape; but the Duke de Montpensier, in descending the wall of the fort, broke his leg, was seized, and reconducted to prison. He consoled himself for his failure, by the thoughts that his brother had succeeded, when he beheld him re-enter the cell, and fall

(1) Toul. v. 272, 273.

(2) Lac. xii. 210. Mig. ii. 382. Fréron, 9—32, 73.

(3) Lac. xii. 212.

upon his neck. Escaped from danger, and on the point of embarking on board a vessel destined for America, he had heard of the misfortune of his brother, and, unable to endure freedom without him, he had returned to prison to share his fate. They were both subsequently liberated, and reached America; but they soon died, the victims of a long and severe captivity of four years (1).

During the predominance of these principles, upwards of eighty Jacobins were denounced in the Convention, and escaped execution only by secreting themselves in different parts of France. The only secure asylum which they found was in the houses of the Royalists, whom, during the days of their power, they had saved from the scaffold. Not one was betrayed by those to whom they fled. So predominant was the influence of the Girondists, that Louvet obtained a decree, ordering an expiatory fête for the victims of 31st May. None of the Thermidoriens ventured to resist the proposal, though many amongst them had contributed in no inconsiderable degree to their fate (2).

Jan. 8, 1795. About the same time, the infant King of France, Louis XVII, expired. The 9th Thermidor came too late to save the life of this unfortunate Prince. His cruel jailer, Simon, was indeed beheaded, and a less cruel tyrant substituted in his place; but the temper of the times would not at first admit of any decided measures of indulgence in favour of the heir to the throne. The barbarous treatment he had experienced from Simon, had alienated his

Death and  
last days of  
Louis  
XVII in  
Prison.

reason, but not extinguished his feelings of gratitude. On one occasion, that inhuman wretch had seized him by the hair, and threatened to dash his head against the wall; the surgeon, Naulin, interfered to prevent him, and the unhappy child next day presented him with two pears, which had been given him for his supper the preceding evening, lamenting, at the same time, that he had no other means of testifying his gratitude. Simon and Hebert had put him to the torture, to extract from him an avowal of crimes connected with his mother, which he was too young to understand; after that cruel day, he almost always preserved silence, lest his words should prove fatal to some of his relations. This resolution, and the closeness of his confinement, soon preyed upon his health. In February 1793, he was seized with a fever, and visited by three Members of the Committee of General Safety; they found him sitting at a little table, making castles of cards. They addressed to him the words of kindness, but could not obtain any answer. In May, the state of his health became so alarming, that the celebrated surgeon Dessault was directed by the Convention to visit him; his generous attentions assuaged the sufferings of his later days, but could not prolong his life (3).

Liberation  
of the  
Duchess  
d'Angou-  
lême.

The public sympathy was so strongly excited by this event, that it induced the Assembly to consent to the freedom of the remaining child of Louis XVI. On the 18th of June, the Duchess d'Angoulême was liberated from the Temple, and exchanged for the four Commissioners of the Convention, whom Dumouriez had delivered up to the Austrians (4).

Continued  
Captivity of  
La Fayette.

The fate of La Fayette, Latour-Maubourg, and other eminent men who were detained in the Austrian prisons, since their defection from the armies of France, at this time excited the most ardent sympathy both

(1) Lac. xii. 216.

(2) Lac. xii. 231.

(3) Lac. xii. 369, 374.

(4) Lac. xii. 383.

in France and England. They had been rigorously guarded since their captivity in the fortress of Olmutz: and the humane in every part of the world beheld with regret men who had voluntarily delivered themselves up to avoid the excesses of a sanguinary faction, treated with more severity than prisoners of war. Mr. Fox in vain endeavoured to induce the British government to interfere in their behalf; the reply of Mr. Pitt in the House of Commons equalled the speech of his eloquent rival. His wife and daughters, finding all attempts at his deliverance ineffectual, generously resolved to share his captivity; and they remained in confinement with him at Olmutz till the victories of Napoléon in 1796 compelled the Austrian government to consent to their liberation. His confinement, however tedious, was probably the means of saving his life; it is hardly possible that in France he could have survived the Reign of Terror, or escaped the multitude to which he had long been the object of execration (1).

Completion of the new Constitution. Meanwhile, the Convention proceeded rapidly with the formation of the new Constitution. This was the *third* which had been imposed upon the French people during the space of a few years; a sufficient proof of the danger of incautiously overturning long-established institutions. The Constitution of 1795 was very different from those which had preceded it, and gave striking proof of the altered condition of the public mind on the state of political affairs. Experience had now taught all classes that the chimera of perfect equality could not be attained; that the mass of the people are unfit for the exercise of political rights; that the contests of factions terminate, if the people are victorious, in the supremacy of the most depraved. The Constitution which was framed under the influence of these sentiments, differed widely from the democratic institutions of 1793. The ruinous error was now acknowledged of uniting the whole legislative powers in one Assembly, and enacting the most important laws, without the intervention of any time to deliberate on their tendency, or recover from the excitement under which they may have originated. The legislative power, therefore, was divided into two Councils, that of the *Five Hundred*, and that of the *Ancients*. The Council of Five Hundred was intrusted with the sole power of originating laws; that of the Ancients with the power of passing or rejecting them; and to ensure the prudent discharge of this duty, no person could be a member of it till he had reached the age of forty years. No bill could pass till after it had been three times read, with an interval between each reading of at least five days (2).

The Constitution of the Directory. The executive power, instead of being vested as heretofore in two committees, was lodged in the hands of five Directors, nominated by the Council of Five Hundred, approved by that of the Ancients. They were liable to be impeached for their misconduct by the Councils. Each individual was by rotation to be President during three months; and every year a fifth new Director was to be chosen in lieu of one who was bound to retire. The Directory thus constituted, had the entire disposal of the army and finances, the appointment of all public functionaries, and the management of all public negotiations. They were lodged during the period of their official duty in the Palace of the Luxembourg, and attended by a guard of honour (3).

(1) Lac. x. 386, 387.

(2) Mig. ii. 385. Toul. v. 404. Th. viii. 13.

(3) Mig. ii. 386, 387. Toul. v. 399. Th. viii. 13, 14.

**Elective Franchise confined to Proprietors.** The privilege of electing members for the legislature was taken away from the great body of the people, and confined to the colleges of delegates. Their meetings were called the *Primary Assemblies*; and in order to ensure the influence of the middling ranks, the persons elected by the Primary Assemblies were themselves the electors of the members of the legislature. All popular societies were interdicted, and the press declared absolutely free (1).

It is of importance to recollect that this Constitution, so cautiously framed to exclude the direct influence of the people, and curb the excesses of popular licentiousness, was the voluntary work of the very Convention which had come into power under the democratic Constitution of 1793, and immediately after the 10th August; which had voted the death of the King, the imprisonment of the Girondists, and the execution of Danton; which had supported the bloody excesses of the Decemvirs, and survived the horrors of the Reign of Robespierre. Let it no longer be said, therefore, that the evils of popular rule are imaginary dangers, contradicted by the experience of mankind; the checks thus imposed upon the power of the people were the work of their own delegates, chosen by universal suffrage during a period of unexampled public excitement, whose proceedings had been marked by a more violent love of freedom than any that ever existed from the beginning of the world. Nothing can speak so strongly in favour of the necessity of controlling the people, as the work of the representatives whom they had themselves chosen to confirm their power.

**Great agitation in Paris, and throughout France at these changes.** The formation of this Constitution, and its discussion in the assemblies of the people, to which it was submitted for consideration, excited the most violent agitation throughout France. Paris, as usual, took the lead. Its forty-eight sections were incessantly assembled, and the public effervescence resembled that of 1789. This was brought to its height by a decree of the Assembly, declaring that *two-thirds* of the present Convention should form a part of the new legislature, and that the electors should only fill up the remaining part. The citizens beheld with horror so large a proportion of a body, whose proceedings had deluged France with blood, still destined to reign over them. To accept the Constitution, and reject this decree, seemed the only way of getting free from their domination. The Thermidorien party had been entirely excluded from the Committee of *Eleven*, to whom the formation of the new Constitution was intrusted, and in revenge they joined the assemblies of those who sought to counteract their ambition. The focus of the effervescence was the section Lepelletier, formerly known by the name of that of the *Filles-St.-Thomas*, the richest and most powerful in Paris, which, through all the changes of the Revolution, had steadily adhered to Royalist principles (2).

**Coalition of Royalists with Sections of National Guard.** The Royalist Committees of Paris, of which Lemaitre was the known agent, finding matters brought to this crisis, coalesced with the journals and the leaders of the sections. They openly accused the Convention of attempting to perpetuate their power, and of aiming at usurping the sovereignty of the people. The orators of the sections said at the bar of the Assembly, "Deserve our choice, do not seek to command it; you have exercised an authority without bounds; you have united

(1) Mig. ii. 365. Th. viii. 14. 15.

(2) Toul. v. 327, 328, 330. Th. viii. 16-18. Mig. ii. 368, 369. Lac. xii. 402, 403.

in yourselves all the powers, those of making laws, of revising them, of changing them, of executing them. Recollect how fatal military despotism was to the Roman Republic." The press of Paris teemed with pamphlets, inveighing against the ambitious views of the legislature; and the efforts of the sections were incessant to defeat their projects. The agitation of 1789 was renewed, but it was all now on the other side; the object now was, not to restrain the tyranny of the Court, but repress the ambition of the delegates of the people (1).

Vehement  
Royalist  
Declama-  
tions at the  
Sections.

"Will the Convention," said the Royalist orators, "never be satisfied? Is a reign of three years, fraught with more crimes than the whole annals of twenty other nations, not sufficient for those who rose into power under the auspices of the 10th August, and the 2d September? Is that power fit to repose under the shadow of the laws, which has only lived in tempests? Let us not be deceived by the 9th Thermidor; the Bay of Quiberon, where Tallien bore so conspicuous a part, may show us that the thirst for blood is not extinguished even among those who overthrew Robespierre. The Convention has done nothing but destroy; shall we now intrust it with the work of conservation? What reliance can be placed on the monstrous coalition between the proscribers and the proscribed? Irreconcilable enemies to each other, they have only entered into this semblance of alliance in order to resist those who hate them—that is every man in France. It is we ourselves who have forced upon them those acts of tardy humanity on which they now rely as a veil to their monstrous proceedings. But for our warm representations, the members *hors la loi* would still have been wandering in exile, the seventy-three deputies still languishing in prison. Who but ourselves formed the faithful guard who saved them from the terrible Faubourgs, to whom they had basely yielded their best members on the 31st May? they now call upon us to select among its ranks those who should continue members, and form the two-thirds of the new Assembly. Can two-thirds of the convention be found who are not stained with blood? Can we ever forget that many of its basest acts passed *unanimously*, and that a majority of three hundred and sixty-one passed a vote which will be an eternal subject of mourning to France. Shall we admit a majority of regicides into the new assembly, intrust our liberty to cowards, our fortunes to the authors of so many acts of rapine, our lives to murderers? The Convention is only strong because it mixes up its crimes with the glories of our armies; let us separate them; let us leave the Convention its sins, and our soldiers their triumphs, and the world will speedily do justice to both (2).

Extreme  
agitation at  
Paris.

Such discourses, incessantly repeated from the tribunes of forty-eight sections, violently shook the public mind in the capital. To give greater publicity to their sentiments, the orators repeated the same sentiments in addresses at the bar of the Assembly, which were immediately circulated with rapidity through the departments. The effervescence in the South was at its height; many important cities and departments seemed already disposed to imitate the sections of the metropolis. The cities of Dreux and Chartres warmly seconded their wishes; the sections of Orléans sent the following message:—"Primary Assemblies of Paris, Orléans is at your side,

(1) Lac. xii. 404. Toul. v. 331, 333. Th. viii. 20.  
22, 23. Mig. ii. 389.

(2) Lac. xii. 406, 409.

it advances on the same line ; let your cry be resistance to oppression, hatred to usurpers, and we will second you (1)."

The National Guard of Paris shared in the general excitation. The troops of the *Jeunesse dorée* had inspired its members with part of their own exultation of feeling, and diminished much of their wonted timidity. Resistance to the tyrant was openly spoken of; the Convention compared to the Long Parliament which shed the blood of Charles I.; and the assistance of a Monk ardently looked for to consummate the work of restoration (2).

Convention throw themselves on the Army. Surrounded by so many dangers, the Convention did not abate of its former energy. They had lost the Jacobins by their proscriptions, the Royalists by their ambition. What remained? THE ARMY; and this terrible engine they resolved to employ, as the only means of establishing their power. They lost no time in submitting the Constitution to the soldiers, and by them it was unanimously adopted. Military men, accustomed to obey, and to take the lead from others, usually, except in periods of uncommon excitement, adopt any Constitution which is recommended to them by their officers. A body of five thousand regular troops were assembled in the neighbourhood of Paris, and their adhesion eagerly announced to the citizens. The Convention called to their support the Prætorian Guards; they little thought how soon they were to receive from them a master (3).

Sections openly resolve to Revolt.

It soon appeared that not only the armies, but a large majority of the departments had accepted the Constitution. The inhabitants of Paris, however, accustomed to take the lead in all public measures, were not discouraged; the Section Lepelletier unanimously passed a resolution, "That the powers of every constituted authority ceased in presence of the assembled people; and a provisional government, under the name of a Central Committee, was established under the auspices of its leaders. A majority of the Sections adopted their resolution, which was immediately annulled by the Convention, and their decree was, in its turn, reversed by the Assemblies of the Electors. The contest now became open between the Sections and the Legislature; the former separated the Constitution from the decrees, ordaining the re-election of two-thirds of the old Assembly; they accepted the former, and rejected the latter (4).

Meeting of the Electors at the Théâtre-Français.

On the 3d October, (11th Vendemaire,) it was resolved by the Sections, that the electors chosen by the people should be assembled at the Théâtre-Français, under protection of the National Guard; and on the 3d they were conducted there by an armed force of chasseurs and grenadiers. The dangers of an insurrection against a government, having at its command the military force of France, was apparent; but the enthusiasm of the moment overbalanced all other considerations. On the one side it was urged, "Are we about to consecrate, by our example, that odious principle of insurrections which so many bloody days have rendered odious? Our enemies alone are skilled in revolt; the art of exciting them is unknown to us. The multitude is indifferent to our cause; deprived of their aid, how can we face the government? If they join our ranks, how shall we restrain their sanguinary excesses? Should we prove victorious, what dynasty shall we establish? what chiefs can we present to the armies? Is there not

(1) Lac. xii. 44.

(2) Lac. xii. 414. Th. viii. 22, 23.

(3) Lac. xii. 414, 415. Th. viii. 35, 36. Mig. ii. 390.

(4) Mig. ii. 390, 391. Lac. xii. 415. Th. viii. 26, 29, 30. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 368, 369.

too much reason to fear that success would only revive divisions, now happily forgotten, and give our enemies the means of profiting by our discord?" But to this it was replied,—“Honour forbids us to recede; duty calls upon us to restore freedom to our country, his throne to our monarch. We may now, by seizing the decisive moment, accomplish that which former patriots sought in vain to achieve. The 9th Thermidor only destroyed a tyrant; now tyranny itself is to be overthrown. If our names are now obscure, they will no longer remain so; we shall acquire a glory, of which even the brave Vendéans shall be envious. Let us Dare: that is the watchword in Revolutions; may it for once be employed on the side of order and freedom. The Convention will never forgive our outrages; the revolutionary tyranny, curbed for more than a year by our exertions, will rise up with renewed vigour for our destruction, if we do not anticipate its vengeance by delivering ourselves.” Moved by these considerations, the Sections unanimously resolved upon resistance (1).

They resolve to Fight.

The National Guard amounted to above thirty thousand men; but it was totally destitute of artillery; the Sections having, in the belief that they were no farther required, delivered up the pieces with which they had been furnished in 1789, upon the final disarming of the insurgent Faubourgs. Their want was now severely felt, as the Convention had fifty pieces at their command, whose terrible efficacy had been abundantly proved on the 10th August; and the cannoneers who were to serve them, were the same who had broken the lines of Prince Cobourg. The National Guard hoped, by a rapid advance, to capture this formidable train of artillery, and then the victory was secure (2).

Measures of the Convention.

Oct. 3, 1795.

The leaders of the Convention, on their side, were not idle. In the evening of the 3d October (11th Vendémiaire), a decree was passed, ordering the immediate dissolution of the electoral bodies in Paris, and embodying into a regiment fifteen hundred of the Jacobins, many of whom were liberated from the prisons for that especial purpose. These measures brought matters to a crisis between the sections and the government. This decree was openly resisted, and the National Guard having assembled in force to protect the electors at the Théâtre Français, the Convention ordered the military to dispossess them. General Menou was appointed commander of the armed force, and he advanced with the troops of the line to surround the Convent des Filles-St.-Thomas, the centre of the insurrection, where the section Lepelletier was assembled (3).

Failure of Menou against the Insurgents.

Menou, however, had not the decision requisite for success in civil contests. Instead of attacking the insurgents, he entered into a negotiation with them, and retired in the evening without having effected any thing. His failure gave all the advantages of a victory to the sections, and the National Guard mustered in greater strength than ever, and resolved to attack the Convention at its place of assembly on the following day. Informed of this failure, and the dangerous fermentation which it had produced in Paris, the Convention, at eleven at night, dismissed General Menou, and gave the command of the armed force, with unlimited powers, to General Barras. He immediately demanded the assistance, as second in command, of a young officer of artillery,

Armed Force of the Convention intrusted to Barras and Napoléon.

(1) Lac. xii. 391, 415—416.

(2) Lac. xii. 419.

(3) Mig. ii. 391. Lac. xii. 421. Th. viii. 35, 36.

who had distinguished himself at the siege of Toulon, and the war in the Maritime Alps, **NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE** (1).

His decisive  
Measures in  
Seizing the  
Artillery.

This young officer was immediately introduced to the Committee. His manner was timid and embarrassed; the career of public life was as yet new; but his clear and distinct opinions, the energy and force of his language, already indicated the powers of his mind. By his advice the powerful train of artillery in the plains of Sablons, consisting of fifty pieces, was immediately brought by a lieutenant, afterwards well known in military annals, named **MURAT**, to the capital, and disposed in such a position as to command all the avenues to the Convention. Early on the following morning the neighbourhood of the Tuileries resembled a great intrenched camp. The line of defence extended from the Pont-Neuf, along the quays of the river to the Pont Louis XV; the Place du Carrousel, and the Louvre, were filled with cannon, and the entrance of all the streets which open into the Rue St.-Honoré, were strongly guarded. In this position the commanders of the Convention awaited the attack of the insurgents. Napoléon was indefatigable in his exertions to inspire the troops with confidence: he visited every post, inspected every battery, and spoke to the men with that decision and confidence which is so often the prelude to victory (2).

Combat  
round the  
Tuileries.

The action was soon commenced; above thirty thousand men, under generals Danican and Duhoux surrounded the little army of six thousand, who with this powerful artillery, defended the seat of the Legislature. The firing began in the Rue St.-Honoré at half-past four; the grenadiers, placed on the Church of St.-Roch, opened a fire of musketry on the cannoneers of the Convention, who replied by a discharge of grape-shot, which swept destruction through the serried ranks of the National Guard which occupied the Rue St.-Honoré. Though the insurgents fought with the most determined bravery, and the fire from the Church of St.-Roch was well sustained, nothing could resist the murderous grape-shot of the regular soldiers. Many of the cannoneers fell at the guns, but the fire of their pieces was not diminished. In a few minutes the Rue St.-Honoré was deserted, and the flying columns carried confusion into the ranks of the reserve, who were formed near the Church of the Filles-St.-Thomas. General Danican galloped off at the first discharge, and never appeared again during the day. Meanwhile, the Pont-Neuf was carried by the insurgents, and a new column, ten thousand strong, advanced along the opposite quay to the Tuileries, to attack the Pont-Royal; Napoléon allowed them to advance within twenty yards of his batteries, and then opened his fire; the insurgents stood three discharges without flinching; but not having resolution enough to rush upon the cannon, they were ultimately driven back in disorder, and by seven o'clock the victory of the Convention was complete at all points. At nine, the troops of the line carried the posts of the National Guard in the Palais-Royal, and on the following morning the section Lepelletier was disarmed, and the insurgents everywhere submitted (3).

Establish-  
ment of Mi-  
litary Des-  
potism.

Such was the result of the **LAST INSURRECTION** of the people in the French Revolution; all the subsequent changes were effected by the government, or the armies, without their interference. The insur-

(1) Mig. ii. 392. Lac. xii. 421, 434. Th. viii. 37—39.

(2) Mig. ii. 393. Nap. ii. 267, and iii. 70, 74. Th. viii. 40, 41, 42. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 383.

(3) Mig. ii. 394, 395. Lac. xii. 436, 441. Th. viii. 42, 50. Toal. v. 366, 368. Nap. i. 70, 73. Bour. i. 90, 96.



gents were not the rabble or the assassins who had so long stained its history with blood; they were the flower of the citizens of Paris, comprising all that the Revolution had left that was generous, or elevated, or noble in the capital. They were overthrown, not by the superior numbers or courage of their adversaries, but by the terrible effect of their artillery, by the power of military discipline, and the genius of that youthful conqueror, before whom all the armies of Europe were destined to fall. The moral strength of the nation was all on their side; but in revolutions, it is seldom that moral strength proves ultimately victorious; and the examples of Cæsar and Cromwell are not required to show that the natural termination of civil strife is military despotism.

Humanity  
of the Con-  
vention after  
their Vic-  
tory.

The Convention made a generous use of their victory. The Girondists, who exercised an almost unlimited sway over its members, put in practice those maxims of clemency which they had so often recommended to others; the officers who had gained the victory, felt a strong repugnance to their laurels being stained with the blood of their fellow-citizens. Few executions followed this decisive victory: M. Lafont, one of the military chiefs of the revolt, obstinately resisting the means of evasion which were suggested to him by the Court, was alone condemned, and died with a firmness worthy of the cause for which he suffered. Most of the accused persons were allowed time to escape, and sentence of outlawry merely recorded against them; many returned shortly after to Paris, and resumed their place in public affairs. The clemency of Napoléon was early conspicuous; his counsels, after the victory, were all on the side of mercy, and his intercession saved General Menou from a military commission (1).

Election of  
the Council  
of Ancients  
and Five  
Hundred.

In the formation of the Councils of Five Hundred, and of the Ancients, the Convention made no attempt to constrain the public wishes. The third of the legislature, who had been newly elected, were almost all on the side of the insurgents, and even contained several Royalists; and a proposal was in consequence made by Tallien, that the election of that third should be annulled, and another appeal made to the people. Thibaudeau, with equal firmness and eloquence, resisted the proposal, which was rejected by the Assembly. They merely took the precaution, to prevent a return to royalty, to name for the Directors five persons who had voted for the death of the King, Laréveillère, Rewbell, Letourneur, Barras, and Carnot. Having thus settled the new government, they published a general amnesty, changed the name of the Place de la Révolution into that of Place de la Concorde, and declared their sittings terminated. The last days of an Assembly stained with so much blood, were gilded by an act of clemency of which Thibaudeau justly said the annals of kings furnished few examples (2).

Reflections  
on the His-  
tory of the  
Convention.

The Convention sat for more than three years; from the 21st September, 1791, to the 26th October, 1795. During that long and terrible period, its precincts were rather the field on which faction strove for ascendancy, than the theatre on which legislative wisdom exerted its influence. All the parties which divided France there endeavoured to establish their power, and all perished in the attempt. The Girondist attempted it, and perished; the Mountain attempted it, and perished; the Mu-

(1) Th. viii. 66. Lac. xii. 441. Mig. ii. 395.  
Hist. de la Conv. iv. 387, 390.

(2) Mig. ii. 398. Lac. xii. 444. Thib. ii. 12, 13.  
Th. viii. 65, 67. Hist. de la Conv. iv. 389.

nicipality attempted it, and perished; Robespierre attempted it, and perished; the Royalists attempted it, and perished. In revolutions, it is easy to destroy; the difficulty is to establish and secure. All the experience of years of suffering, fraught with centuries of instruction; all the wisdom of age, all the talent of youth, were unable to form one stable government. A few years, often a few months, were sufficient to overturn the most apparently stable institutions. A fabric seemingly framed for eternal duration, disappeared almost before its authors had consummated their work. The gales of popular favour, ever fickle and changeable, deserted each successive faction as they rose into power; and the ardent part of the nation, impatient of control, deemed any approach to regular government insupportable tyranny (1). The lower classes, totally incapable of rational thought, gave their support to the different parties only as long as they continued to inveigh against their superiors; when they became those superiors themselves, they passed over to their enemies.

Slow  
growth of  
all durable  
Human In-  
stitutions.

Human institutions are not like the palace of the architect, framed according to fixed rules, capable of erection in any situation, and certain in the effect to be produced. They resemble rather the trees of the forest, slow of growth, tardy of development, readily susceptible of destruction. An instant will destroy what it has taken centuries to produce; centuries must again elapse before in the same situation a similar production can be formed. Transplantation, difficult in the vegetable, is impossible in the moral world; the seedling must be nourished in the soil, inured to the climate, hardened by the winds. Many examples are to be found of institutions being suddenly imposed upon a people; none of those so formed having any duration. To be adapted to their character and habits, they must have grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength.

The progress of improvement is irresistible. Feudal tyranny must give way in an age of increasing opulence, and the human mind cannot be forever enchained by the fetters of superstition. No efforts of power could have *prevented* a change in the government of France; but they might have altered its character and spared its horrors. Nature has ordained that mankind should, when they are fit for it, be free; but she has not ordained that they should reach this freedom steeped in blood. Although, therefore, the overthrow of the despotic government and modification of the power of the privileged orders of France was inevitable, yet the dreadful atrocities with which their fall was attended might have been averted by human wisdom. The life of the monarch might have been saved; the constitution might have been modified, without being subverted; the aristocracy purified, without being destroyed.

Reflections  
on the His-  
tory of the  
Revolution,  
and the  
causes of its  
Disasters.

Timely concession from the Crown is the first circumstance which perhaps might have altered the character of the French Revolution. Had Louis, in the commencement of the troubles, yielded the great and reasonable demands of the people; had he granted them equality of taxation, the power of voting subsidies, freedom from arrest, and periodical Parliaments, the agitation of the moment might have been allayed, and an immediate collision between the throne and the people prevented. At a subsequent period, indeed, increasing demands, and the want of more extended privileges, might have arisen; but these discontents, being turned

(1) Mig. ii. 397.

into a regular and legal channel, would probably have found vent without destroying the state. When the floods are out, safety is to be found only in providing early and effectual means for letting off the superfluous waters, and, at the same time, strengthening the barriers against their farther encroachment.

But although the gradual concession of power, and the redress of all *real* grievances before the Revolution, would have been not less politic than just, nothing can be clearer, than that the sudden and vast accession of importance conferred by M. Necker on the Tiers-État, by the duplication of their numbers, was to the last degree prejudicial, and was, in fact, the immediate cause of the Revolution. Such a sudden addition, like the instantaneous emancipation of slaves, cannot but prove destructive, not only to the higher classes, but the lower. The powers of freedom can only be borne by those who have gradually become habituated to them; those who acquire them suddenly, by their intemperate use speedily fall under a worse despotism than that from which they revolted. By the consequences of this sudden and uncalled for innovation, the Commons of France threw off the beneficent reign of a reforming monarch, they fell under the iron grasp of the Committee of Public Safety, were constrained to tremble under the bloody sway of Robespierre, and fawn upon the military sceptre of Napoléon.

No lesson is more strongly impressed upon the mind by the progress of the French Revolution than the disastrous consequences which followed the desertion of their country by the higher orders, and the wonderful effects which might have resulted from a determined resistance on their part to the first actual outrages by the people. Nearly an hundred thousand emigrants basely fled from their country, at a time when a few hundred resolute men might have saved the monarchy from destruction. La Fayette, with a few battalions of the National Guard, vanquished the Jacobins in the Champ-de-Mars: had he marched against their Club, and been vigorously supported, the Reign of Terror would have been prevented. Five hundred horse would have enabled the Swiss Guard to have saved the throne on the 10th August, and subdue an insurrection, which deluged the kingdom with blood. Three thousand of the troops of the Sections overthrew Robespierre at the zenith of his power; a body of undisciplined young men chased the Jacobins from the streets, and rooted out their den of wickedness; Napoléon, with five thousand regular soldiers, vanquished the National Guard of Paris, and crushed an insurrection, headed by the whole moral strength of France. These examples may convince us what can be accomplished by a small body of resolute men in civil convulsions; their physical power is almost irresistible; their moral influence commands success. One-tenth part of the emigrants who fled from France, if properly headed and disciplined, would have been sufficient to have curbed the fury of the populace, crushed the ambition of the reckless, and prevented the Reign of Terror (1).

No doubt can now exist that the interference of the Allies augmented the horrors, and added to the duration of the Revolution. All its bloodiest excesses were committed during, or after an alarming, but unsuccessful invasion by the Allied Forces. The massacres of September 2d were perpetrated when the public mind was excited to the highest degree, by the near approach of the Duke of Brunswick; and the worst days of the government of Robes-

(1) Burke, vi. 237.

pierre, were immediately after the defection of Dumouriez, and the battle of Nerwinde, threatened the rule of the Jacobins with destruction. Nothing but a sense of public danger could have united the factions who then strove with so much exasperation against each other; the peril of France alone could have induced the people to submit to the sanguinary rule which so long desolated its plains. The Jacobins maintained their ascendancy by constantly representing their cause as that of national independence, by stigmatizing their enemies as the enemies of the country; and the patriots wept and suffered in silence, lest by resistance they should weaken the state, and erase France from the book of nations.

In combating a revolution one of two courses must be followed; either to advance with vigour, and crush the hydra in its cradle, or to leave the factions to contend with each other, and trust for safety to the reaction which crime and suffering necessarily produce. The suppression of the Spanish Revolution by the Duke d'Angoulême in 1823, is an example of the success of the first system: the bloodless restoration of the English monarchs, in 1660, a proof of the wisdom of the second. To advance with menaces, and recoil with shame; to awaken resistance, and not extinguish opposition; to threaten, and not execute, is the most ruinous course that can possibly be adopted. It is to unite faction by community of danger; to convert revolutionary energy into military power; to strengthen the hands of crime, by giving it the support of virtue. Ignorance of the new element which was acting in human affairs may extenuate the fatal errors committed by the European powers in the first years of the Revolutionary war; no excuse will hereafter remain for a repetition of the mistake.

But it is not with impunity that such sins as disgraced the Revolution can be committed by any people. The actors in the bloody tragedy almost all destroyed each other; their crimes led to their natural and condign punishment, in rendering them the first victims of the passions which they had unchained. But a signal and awful retribution was also due to the nation which had suffered these iniquities, which had permitted such torrents of innocent blood to flow, and spread the bitterness of domestic suffering to such an unparalleled extent throughout the land. These crimes were registered in the book of fate; the anguish they had brought on others was speedily felt by themselves; the tears they had caused to flow, were washed out in the torrents which fell from guilty eyes (1). France was decimated for her cruelty; for twenty-years the flower of her youth was marched away by a relentless power to the harvest of death; the snows of Russia revenged the guillotine of Paris. Allured by the phantom of military glory, they fell down and worshipped the power which was consuming them; they followed it to the verge of destruction, till the mask of the spectre fell, and the ghastly features of death appeared.

This dreadful punishment also was the immediate effect of the atrocities which it chastised. In the absence of all the enjoyments of domestic life, in the destruction of every pacific employment, one only career, that of violence, remained. From necessity, as well as inclination, every man took to arms; the sufferings of the state swelled the ranks on the frontier, and France became a great military power, from the causes which it was thought would

(1) "There is in the misfortunes of France, enough," says Savary, "to make her sons shed tears of blood."—Savary, iv. 382.

have led to its destruction. The natural consequence of this was the establishment of military despotism, and the prosecution of the insane career of conquest by a victorious chieftain. France only awakened from her dream of ambition when her youth was mowed down, her armies destroyed, her conquests rifled, and her glory lost. Both the Allied Powers, and the French people suffered in these disastrous conflicts, because both deserved to suffer; the former for their ambitious projects on the territory of the Republic, the latter for their unparalleled cruelty.

Finally, the history of those melancholy periods affords the strongest evidence of the incessant operation of the principles destined for the preservation of social happiness, even in the darkest periods of human existence. Since the fall of the Roman Empire no such calamitous era had arisen as that which immediately followed the 10th of August; none in which innocence so generally suffered, and vice so long triumphed; in which impiety was so openly professed, and profligacy so generally indulged; in which blood flowed in such ceaseless torrents, and anguish embittered such a multitude of hearts. Yet, even in those disastrous times, the benevolent laws of Nature were incessantly acting; this anguish expiated the sins of former times; this blood tamed the fierceness of present discord. In the stern school of adversity wisdom was learned, and error forgotten; speculation ceased to blind its votaries, and ambition to mislead by the language of virtue. Years of suffering conferred centuries of experience; the latest posterity will, it is to be hoped, in that country at least, reap the fruits of the Reign of Terror. Like all human things, the government of France may undergo changes in the lapse of time; different institutions may be required, and new dynasties called to the throne; but no bloody convulsion similar to that which once tore its bosom will again take place; the higher ranks will not a second time be massacred by the lower; another French Revolution of the same character as the last, and the age in which it occurs, must be ignorant of the First.



END OF VOLUME SECOND.











